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**SARANAGATI DEEPIKA**  
**OF**  
**VEDANTA DESIKA**



**with meaning and commentary in English**

**by**

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# ஸ்ரீ : BHOOMIKA

BY  
HIS HOLINESS SRIMAD ANDAVAN  
of Srirangam Periaasramam.

ஸ்ரீரங்கநாத திவ்யமணி பாதுகாப்பாய் நமஃ.  
ஸ்ரீமத: ஸ்ரீராமஸ்வாமிநாமந: ச்ரேயஸே க்ரியதே  
ஸ்ரீரங்கநாத திவ்யமணிபாதுகாஸ்ம்ருதி:

Sri Vedanta Desika has composed, as is well-known, over a hundred treatises extending over thousands of granthas and in almost every literary form of importance. Any one of his compositions would suffice to provide the necessary mental, moral and spiritual sustenance so essential for our well-being here and hereafter.

The doctrines of any school of thought could be brought under three heads- Tattva (the Real), Hita (the way or the means of realising the supreme goal of life), and Purushartha (the supreme goal). Different Siddhantas hold divergent views on these fundamentals. The unique features of the Visishtadvaitic conception of the Real, the Way and the Goal are set forth in every one of Sri Vedanta Desika's works. No work of his, be it brief or elaborate, fails to deal with them. That is why it has been said rightly, that if one studies any one of his works, it would equip one to order his life aright till he attains the blessed life.

Among the six Stotras that Vedanta Desika has composed in praise of the Archamurtis of the six Divyadesas in the vicinity of his place of birth (Avatara-sthala), Saranagati-Dipika is of special importance. This hymn in praise of Lord Dipa-prakasa, the presiding Deity of Tiruttanka, known in Sanskrit as Himopavana, contains a brief and lucid exposition of the central doctrines of Ramanuja-sampradaya as handed down through Kidambi



Aacchaan, the foremost among the disciples who enjoyed the confidence of that 'Prince among Ascetics'. In the opening stanza Vedanta Desika refers to this significant aspect of this hymn. With characteristic modesty he states that in expressing in his own words in the garb of a Stotra in praise of the Consort of Padma, the great tradition that emanated from the kitchen of the King of Yatis, he has not diminished its value:

:-“ மத்வாக்ய ஸம்வலிதமபி அஜஹத்ஸ்வபாவம்  
மாந்யம் யதீஸுவர-மஹாநஸ-ஸம்ப்ரதாயம்”.

Saranagati-dipika consists of 59 stanzas; and of these, the first twenty deal with the nature of the Real (Tattva); the next ten slokas are devoted to an exposition of the nature of Hita; the ten stanzas that follow explain the nature of the *athika* and *aamushmika* Purusharthas. The last nineteen set forth Vedanta Desika's prayer.

In the second stanza it is stated that the Supreme Deity of transcendent glory, who is ever served by Sri-devi and Bhu-devi, who abounds in illimitable Daya and who is knowable only from the Upanishads, shines forth near the Vegavati River, easily accessible to all. The third stanza brings out the significance of the name Dipaprakasa whose equivalent in Tamil is Vilakkoli (விளக்கொளி). The Lord is the Lamp (Dipa); and Goddess Lakshmi is its lustre (prakasa or prabha); and the two together constitute Dipaprakasa who dispels the ajnana (ignorance) afflicting mankind from beginningless time. Then follows a description of the Lord's divine form from His blessed Feet to His resplendent crown. Stanza four states how the Lord in His sublime emerald-like form embraced by Lakshmi of golden hue shines with even greater splendour as the beloved Consort of Lakshmi. The fifth stanza speaks of the Lord's sublime Tirumoni, shining like blue sapphire, as a beautiful lotus-tank, deep and beautiful, sweet and charming, pure and purifying, and reflecting Lakshmi, and dispelling fatigue.



Stanza six describes the Lord, the Consort of Lakshmi, as supporting and controlling the entire Universe, as having the Cosmos for His body and as the Ultimate Cause of all. The truly wise know Him as the Highest Purusha with the aid of these and other inalienable qualities. The seventh stanza says that all the worlds form His body even as His Divya-mangala-vigraha. The Upanishads describe Him as all (sarvam) and as being greater than everything else. Contemplation on His sublime vigraha is most blissful and it dispels all Samsara.

Stanzas 8 to 20 describe the Lord as having in His essential nature the sixfold attributes of jñāna, bala, āsvarya, virya, śakti and tejas; as creating the world out of His boundless compassion, in accordance with the Karma of souls; as giving them the Vedas and other Sastras, teaching them that He could be reached through the help of Preceptors, and as creating the world, maintaining it in existence and as directing the activities of all created beings—all for His own sake. It is further stated that He is Himself the means of reaching Him. He creates all sentient and non-sentient things, endows them with their respective qualities, and takes delight in seeing them at work even as a king dresses up dolls, feeds parrots and thereby derives enjoyment. The Upanishads speak of Him as father, mother, brother, all kinds of relatives, and as protector. Souls who through their Karma get to be under the influence of the three gunas of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, could get predominance of Sattva, so necessary for attaining Moksha, only through His Grace. To make them cultivate Sattva-guna He bestows on them the saving knowledge and thus takes efforts to make them reach Him. Even as old people, children, the blind and the crippled are led from place to place, souls are taken unto His blessed Feet by His own effort.

The Lord enables them to cross the Ocean of Samsara by making them adopt either Bhakti or Prāpatti. He



incarnates in diverse forms and establishes Dharma (righteousness). Brahma, Rudra and other gods constitute but a tiny drop in the vast, immeasurable Ocean of His riches and Glory. The benevolent Lord, through His *saukilya*, mingles with the lowly, and redeems them. From the life-stories of gods like Brahma and Rudra, it would be evident that they are the beneficiaries of His bounteous favours, such as rescue from the curses under which they suffer. He alone is the Supreme Deity. Souls that fear to approach Him considering His transcendent greatness and their own littleness, are induced to approach Him by His incarnating as Acharyas and teaching them to shed their fears taking into consideration the Lord's abounding love of man.

The next three stanzas teach that Bhakti-yoga both in its form as *Saalambana-yoga* (Meditation on the Lord's divine bodily form), and in the higher stage as contemplation on His *Divyaatma-svarupa* (essential nature) is a source of infinite bliss and enables one to cast off one's bondage (*samsara*) and attain Mukti. The greatness of Bhakti-yoga is indicated in seven stanzas. The twenty-fourth stanza shows that even those who follow karma-yoga and jnana-yoga, attain their respective objectives only through the Lord's *prasada*.

Stanzas 25 to 30 treat of *Saranagati*. To practise Bhakti-yoga the aspirant should be a Brahmin or Kshatriya or Vaisya. He must have the necessary jnana (knowledge) and Sakti (competence). Since Bhakti-yoga has to be practised over a long period and since it takes time to bear fruit, the aspirant should be prepared to wait long for fruition. Only when these qualifications are fulfilled, one can follow Bhakti-yoga. Of these four requisites, if three are present but not one, if two are present and two lacking, if one is present and three absent, and if all the four are not present, there is eligibility for *Saranagati*, but not for Bhakti-yoga. This is quite consistent with the Upanishadic statements that Bhakti is the only means of attaining Moksha.



The explanation is simple. A dwarfish person who is unable to pluck the fruits hanging high up on a tree may entreat a tall individual to get them for him. Likewise Saranagati consists in a person unable to perform Bhakti-yoga entreating God to stand in the place of Bhakti and give him what it could achieve. Those following saranagati need entertain no doubt at all regarding its efficacy.

This path stands in no need of external help; it is universal, open to all; and it is capable of yielding anything one may aspire for. Pleasant and easy to follow, it is not long or tedious. It is observed but once. The angas of Prapatti such as Anukulya-sankalpa and Praatikulya-varjana and some of its other main aspects are next set forth in an attractive and easily understandable way. Saranagati involves three aspects. (1) offering one's own atma unto the Lord, its rightful owner (Svarupa-samarpana); (2) surrender of the responsibility for one's protection unto the Lord (Bhara-samarpana) and; (3) the surrender of the fruits of Prapadana to him (Phala-samarpana). It is said that those who follow the path of karma, jnana or Bhakti are less important than a ten-thousandth part of the performer of Saranagati.

Those who follow the path of Prapatti and are thus assured of liberation continue to perform their obligatory duties of the daily and periodic varieties as worship of the Lord. Just as a chaste wife mindful of the bliss of union with her pati (husband) cherishes her Mangalya-sutra and marriage apparel (Koorai) கூரை and is engaged in her service to her partner, the Prapanna during the remaining days of his earthly sojourn eagerly looks for the privilege of service to the Lord, like a crown prince. Till the end of his life here, he renders service to God and to the devotees of God (Bhaagavatas) and he would keep himself at considerable distance from those who hate God, dreading them as one would dread a serpent. He treats as straw the status of even gods like Brahma and Rudra and would take delight in ever thinking of the Archa forms of the Deity.



Stanzas 37 to 40 state that, at death, the soul of the Prapanna leaves the body, passes through the Archiraadi-maarga, reaches Vaikunta attains its innate glories and finds that its eightfold perfections are fully blossomed. Except in respect of the features, special and unique to the Lord, it attains similarity of bliss with the Supreme.

The next nineteen stanzas express Vedanta Desika's fervent and most moving appeal for protection. Like the Alvars, Vedanta Desika expresses his utter helplessness (karpanya) in most plaintive terms. In a variety of ways he makes known his own unworthiness and pleads that the Lord may be pleased to redeem him merely on the score that he calls himself a prapanna. One is powerfully reminded of the sentiments of the Alvars enshrined in verses beginning with the following words:

கையார் சக்கரத்து      (திருவாய் மொழி 5-1-1)  
 ஈவிலாத தீவினைகள்      (திருவாய் மொழி 4-7-3)  
 குலங்களாய ஈரிரண்டில் (திருச்சந்த விருத்தம் 90)  
 குளித்து முன்றனலை யோம்பும் (திருமாலை 25)  
 ஊரிலேன் காணியில்லை      (திருமாலை 29)  
 மனத்திலோர் தூய்மையில்லை (திருமாலை 30)  
 நோற்ற நோன்பிலேன்      (திருவாய்மொழி 5-7-1)  
 சாந்தேந்துமென்முலையார் (பெரியதிருமொழி 6-3-4)  
 அகலகில்லேன் இறையும் (திருவாய்மொழி 6-10-10)

If the Lord were to let him down, would not, asks Vedanta Desika, the Lord incur the odium of letting down a prapanna? "If Thou wert to let me down", says he, "Thy svamitva, compassion, forbearance, saushilya, aasrita-paaratantrya, purity and audaarya (liberality) and the like would have to be lost." "I have sought Thee", says he again, "putting faith on Thy word of promise uttered on the seashore and from Arjuna's chariot, assuring protection to whoever may approach Thee, professing friendliness and



saying 'I am Thine', and the assurance of release from all sins. Let not those words of Thine become meaningless like the roar of the waves of the ocean. Though more sinful than a thousand Ravanas, I approach Thee, emboldened by the fact that Goddess Lakshmi described as "Srinaati nikhilaan doshaan", is ever by Thy side. Without allowing me to fall a prey to the allurements of the senses and the enjoyment of the self, take me unto Thy blessed Feet. Pray make me an object of Thy boundless compassion and forbearance."

Sriman D. Ramaswamy Aiyangar, well known for his deep acquaintance with the extensive philosophical and religious literature of Visishtadvaita Vedanta and Vaishnava Sampradaya, has in this valuable publication presented Saranagati-dipika with translation and insightful commentary in English. The wealth of ideas suggested in the original is clearly brought out and parallel ideas in other works of Vedanta Desika and in Divya-prabandha and Srimad Ramayana are set forth. Sri D. Ramaswamy Aiyangar shares something of Swami Desika's fascination for Archa forms of the Deity. His Archa-anubhava has a special quality; he sees in Archa the glories of Vibhavavataras too. By his able exposition of this important stotra, he succeeds in communicating something of his enthusiasm to his readers. In the course of his explanation of the text, Sri Ramaswami Aiyangar has also brought out in simple terms the essentials of Visishtadvaitic thought set out elaborately in Sri Bhashya.

May this valuable publication be widely read!

May the readers have the blessings of Sri Vedanta Desika and of Dipa-prakasa, whose glories he sings!

Camp: Bangalore-4. }  
10-4-1974. }

Sri Ranganatha-Paduka-smriti

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ஸ்ரீ :  
Srimate Nigamanta Maha Desikaya Namaha :  
Sri Sundarasoumya Narayanarya Mahadesikaya Namaha :

## FOREWORD

Saranagati Deepika is one of the Stotras of Thoopul Vedanta Desika. It is in praise of Sri Deepaparakasa at Thirutthanka (திருத்தண்கா) by the side of Thoopul. Being in praise of the Deity presiding over the birth place of Sri Desika, naturally this stotra excels all other stotras of his, even Varadaraja Panchasat sung in praise of Sri Varadaraja, his favourite God. This Stotra gives a gist of Srimad Rahasyatraya-sara,—the premier Rahasya-grantha of Sri Desika. A mumukshu (a person desiring to obtain Moksha) can get a full knowledge of Tatva, Hita and Purushartha if he closely studies this Stotra.

If a mumukshu wishes to become a prapanna he has to obtain first of all three things (i) Tirumukhappasuram (திருமுகப் பாசுரம்) i.e., he has to approach first Mahalakshmi and get Her Poorna Anugraha (அஸ்துதே, தயைவ ஸர்வம் ஸம்பதீயதே) and (ii) Satsampradaya Siddhi and (iii) Sadacharya kataaksha. This stotra being the elaboration of Saranagati—as the name of the stotra itself specifically indicates—in the first sloka itself Desika indicates the Sat Sampradaya Siddhi and Sadacharya Kataaksha and then by the 2nd sloka indicates Lakshmi's Tirumukhappasuram by referring to her Nitya Sannidhyam (eternal presence) with the Lord.

Sri Desika asserts in this stotra that God Deepaparakasa and Goddess Marakatavalli are the Paratatva. They are full of kalyana Gunas without any Heya (faulty) gunas. Other gods like Brahma, Siva and Indra are incapable of giving us Moksha since they themselves are in Samsara without attaining Moksha. Desika illustrates this by referring to numerous Puranic episodes. So the Divya Dampatis alone are the Saviours. Sri Desika calls Sriman Narayana as our mother, father brother etc., and these relationships are innate and natural (nirupadhika). He gives the Jeevas body,



indriyas, and along with them the Sastras so that they may find out the upaya suitable to their capacity, and after performing the upaya reach the eternal abode of His.

Two upayas are prescribed in the Sastras viz., Bhakti and Prapatthi. Those who have the necessary capacity, knowledge, the requisite caste, and above all, patience, may take to Bhakti Yoga, and those who do not possess any one of the qualities mentioned above have to resort to Prapatthi. Sri Desika elaborates the various kinds of prapathi that are in vogue. The Upasaka performs the Prapatthi with the help of an Acharya. Desika further says that till the end of this body the Prapanna gladly devotes his full time in the seva of Archa at Divya Desas, and in the Kainkaryam of Bhaagavatas. At the time of Nirvana (death) God leads this Jeevatma along the Archiradi marga and makes him receive all the Bhogas given by the Devas in their respective lokas and ultimately gives him equal enjoyment along with Himself in Paramapada (Vaikunta). Sri Desika narrates all these in the first 40 slokas.

From the 41st sloka Sri Desika's Arthi, intense desire for protection (Raksha) from Deepaparakasa—gradually increases like the yearning of Alvars increasing step by step, and Desika goes on arguing with the Lord giving so many reasons to establish his case for protection and finally asserts that if he is protected, the Lord will receive a special Kataksha (loving glance) from His Consort Mahalakshmi as a reward.

Archa Anubhva Rasika Sriman U. Ve. Vidwan D. Ramaswamy Iyengar, Advocate, Madras, has brought out a commentary on this Stotra in English,—in simple and beautiful English,—so that many devotees may be benefited by reading this Stotra with this commentary and become prapannas.

I am not a competent person to write about Sri D. R. as he is a devout devotee of Archa Emberumans in Divya Desas in general, and Perarulala in particular, and his Archa



Anubhavam—a rare phenomenon to find in anybody—is well known. His Anubhavam can only be seen in person, but cannot be written about. He has written commentaries on so many Stotras of Desika in English, as also on certain Desika Prabandhams in Manipravala. His line of writing commentaries is a unique one being full of Archa-anubhavam. Moreover, his line of thought and way of finding out the meaning of each and every word in the stotra are praiseworthy.

In this commentary he has elaborately dealt with the various aspects of Tatva, Hita and Purushartha. This clearly shows his mastery of Srimad Rahasyatrayasara. Unless one has perfectly understood Rahasyatrayasara it will be very difficult to understand the meaning of this stotra and write a commentary on it.

Many refreshing and new ideas in consonance with Sastra and Sampradya are brought out in his commentary. I shall deal only with one or two. He has clearly and explicitly described the various kinds of Prapatthi viz., Svanishtai, Ukthi (உக்தி) Nishtai and Acharya Nishtai. Moreover, he has mentioned this Prapatthi as a marriage of a Jiva with God celebrated by Acharya. This idea of Sri Desika, very excellently brought out by the commentator, will easily dispel the fears of many people who are under the impression that prapatthi has to be performed only at the time of death; some even think that the utterance of the word Prapatthi itself is inauspicious. Only a very few are blessed with Atma vivaha viz., marriage with God, as that is why it is known as 'Athirshthartham' (அதிருஷ்டார்த்தம், a stroke of good luck). The commentator has elaborated this point fully and stressed the importance of Prapatthi and put forward an appeal to all to have this done by an Acharya at the earliest opportunity without putting it off any longer.

One can see how freely the commentator quotes from various pramaanas such as the Ramayana, Alwar's pasurams and Sri Desika's other stotras like Varadaraja Panchasat, Dayasatakam, Devanayaka Panchasat etc. From this the



knowledge of the commentator in Ithihasa-puranas, Alwars, Divya Prabandhams, Desika's Srisuktis and other Prabandhams is known very well. One feature to be noted in this commentary is that he follows the path of Poorvacharyas strictly, nay is afraid to swerve from their path. He very finely explains how Sri Desika has used the Chathurvida Upayams viz., Sama, Dhana, Bhedha and Danda (ஸாம, தான, பேத, தண்டம்) to achieve his object. This idea is an excellent one unnoticed in other commentaries. The Commentator's sincerity and frankness can be seen from passages where he plainly says, he is not able to know the exact idea of Sri Desika enshrined in some slokas.

Sri Desika's prayer to the Lord in sloka 57 to receive a special Kataaksha of Sri Lakshmi by extending protection to him is very aptly explained in the commentary by saying that even though Sri Lakshmi's full Kataaksha for Perumal is always there,—for, without that He cannot be a supreme God, this Kataaksha is a special, unique, and a fresh one to be obtained only rarely, because very few are blessed to have the prapatti performed and Moksha attained.

Sri D. R. is doing a very useful service to the Sri Vaishnavite community by writing commentaries on Desika Granthas. He has already written commentaries on a major portion of Desika stotras, and the Srivaishnavite community is bound by duty and gratefulness to pray to Deepaprakaasa to shower His blessings on him, and give him energy, a long life and enthusiasm to write commentaries on the remaining stotras of Sri Desika, and thus enlighten the world with Gnana and gladden it by Bhakti.

I heartily thank Sri D. Ramaswamy Ayyangar for making me immerse myself in his Anubhava-Sagara of Saranagati Deepika and for giving me an opportunity to express a 'Thivalai' (திவலை) a small bit of the my enjoyment in the form of this foreword.

Vishnu Kanchi, }  
9—12—1973. }

Brahmadesam Thooppul  
NARASIMHACHARI





# P R E F A C E

**Prof. S. S. RAGHAVACHAR**

[Retd. Head of the Department of Philosophy, Mysore University]

Sri D. Ramaswami Iyengar has done me the honour of asking me to write a preface to his great publication. I am aware of my limitations but the opportunity to pay my homage to the priceless composition of the Acharya is an irresistible temptation.

A general idea of the stotra literature in the Visistadvaita tradition may help us to approach this particular stotra in the proper perspective. Beginning from the great Yamuna-charya, the tradition developing through Ramanuja, Kurannatha, Parasara Bhatta and reaching its widest dimensions in Sri Desika, exhibits some marked characteristics. Though over-flowing with Bhakti of the intensest type, the devotional compositions furnish a brilliant statement of the philosophical position of the school in its three aspects of Tattwa, Hita and Purushartha, contain an ecstatic delienation of the beauty of the Deity, and end with an exemplary and moving personal prayer of the poet. Most of the Stotras are addressed to Deities of particular holy places like Sri Rangam Tirumalai, Kanchi, and they pay special tributes to the particular manifestations of the Lord. There is an orderly presentation of the theme culminating in the highest and intensest personal adoration.

As the tradition does not regard Bhakti as something lower in contrast to Vedantic knowledge, and, in fact looks upon it as the climax of Vedanta, in the Stotra literature, in general, there is abundant incorporation of the truths of the Upanishads, the Brahmasutras, the Gita and Ramayana. The Puranas like Vishnu purana and Srimad Bhagavatam and the Agamas, Pancharathra and Vaikanasa also, enter into Stotras. What is more, the great outpourings of the Alvars



are Sanskritised in them. In the traditional commentaries these elements of the spiritual tradition are distinctly pointed out. Thus it can be seen that Stotra literature in the tradition of Visistadvaita is at once philosophy and personal devotional exercise utilising the entire heritage of philosophical thought and spiritual experience in consummate synthesis.

All these characteristics of devotional poetry reach their most graceful, spontaneous and majestic embodiment in the stotras of Sri Vedanta Desika. The poetic possibilities of the tradition rise to their maturest realisation in his compositions. The Stotra on hand, Saranagati-deepika, is a masterly work of devotion in this style.

There is nothing wanting in it in respect of metaphysics, religious insight, prayer and amazing sweetness of language. It is addressed to the Deity, Deepa-prakasha, worshipped near the place of the Acharya's nativity. The poet brings out the traditional lore concerning the special manifestation in a few felicitous stanzas (1-5). Then he condenses the metaphysical doctrine of God in words of utmost sublimity (6-14). The manner of approach to Him, through Karma, Jnana and Bhakti is appropriately indicated. The two principal pathways, Bhakti and Prapatti are magnificently characterised, in principle and detail (14-24). The latter is specially dwelt upon, its elements and kinds are distinguished and its focal values are presented in all the required clarity and splendour. (25-36). The ideal of Moksha as conceived in this Vedantic tradition is set forth in pregnant and all inclusive words (37-40). The poet-mystic takes up prapatti as his personal mode of approach to God and lives through it, as it were, in the final phase of the hymn (41-57). We have a complete and integral vision of the Supreme Reality and the triumphant march of the human spirit to its ultimate attainment, through a decisive rebirth by way of total surrender. Though the hymn contains other elements of spiritual thought, its main design is to work out the



doctrine of Saranagati by way of personal adoption and performance. Hence the justice of the title Saranagati Deepika.

An adequate appreciation of the Stotra requires in addition to aesthetic and mystical sensibilities, a grasp of the masterly manner in which the entire Vedantic and Srivalshnava heritage is luminously condensed in it and thus constituting it a complete utterance of the supreme vision and life.

In this appreciation we are guided most competently by Sri. D. Ramaswamy Iyengar. He is the chosen instrument of the Lord of Kanchi and the Acharya, Swami Desikan. He brings to his ardent task, vast erudition in the Prabandha literature, in the Rahasyas and other works of Swami Desikan and elucidates each verse, nay, each word, with loving care, deep fervour and keen discernment and builds up, as it were, the imposing structure of the poet's intent before our inner vision. To study his commentary is to go through a thorough education in the philosophy of Sri Desika.

May it be given to us to witness more and more of his loving services to his Lord and Acharya.

*S. S. RAGHAVACHAR*

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# INTRODUCTION

[By Sriman O.V. Alagesan, M.P.]

It was on the last Bhogi day (13-1-1974) when Sri D. Ramaswamy Ayyangar and I were accompanying Lord Varadaraja of Kanchi enjoying His முன்னமுக and பின்னமுக, during His procession to and from Thiruvadi Koil, that Sri D.R. asked me to write an introduction to a commentary he had written on one of the works of Sri Vedanta Desika. My immediate reaction was to express my unworthiness for the task, and then I forgot about it. Not so, Sri D.R. Some time later, he came to my house at Chingleput—unfortunately, I was away at the time—and left his book for me to go through. Even then, I could not pick up courage. Then he followed it with a letter which I could not refuse. Hence, this presumptuousness on my part to pen an Introduction to Sri D.R.'s commentary on 'Deepa-prakasa Saranagathi Deepika', for which I am least qualified.

I happen to be a co-devotee with D.R. of Lord Varadaraja of Kancheepuram. His infatuation for the Lord is well-known. In every festival of the Lord, you can find him, standing with bent frame, drinking deep at the fountain of His insatiable beauty and matchless majesty. For me, enjoyment of any festival of Lord Varadaraja is incomplete without the presence of D.R. I used to feel that the Lord also is disappointed if He does not see His Bhakta before Him. I see a 'Prapanna' in him. All that is said of 'Prapannas' are fulfilled in him. I hope it will be now clear to the reader why I yielded to the temptation of attempting this Introduction, which is like holding an earthen lamp to the effulgent sun in the sky.

Sri Thooppul Vedanta Desika is a giant among Acharyas. He strode the Sri Vaishnavaita world like a Colossus in his time. He was a subtle thinker, prolific



writer, eminent poet, skilled logician, and a profound philosopher. Above all, he was a great devotee. He was a scholar in Sanskrit Srutis and Tamil Vedas alike. He wrote and sang with equal felicity in both Sanskrit and Tamil. Nay, he wrote in Prakrit too. His works constitute the bedrock of Prapatti Yoga. He has streamlined and systematised it in his magnum opus Rahasyatraya Sara. It is further illumined in Saranagati Deepika. His other works in which he establishes the supremacy of Prapatti as an Upaya for attaining moksha vis-a-vis Bhakti Yoga, are Nyasa Vimsati, Niksheparaksha, Nyasa Tilaka and Nyasa Dasaka.

If one follows the course of Hindu religion over the millennia and analyses its growth, one will find how beautifully it has been evolving itself without losing its roots. If Vedas are the principal source, the Upanishads are the end product. They are called Vedanta. If Vedas deal with Karma, Vedanta occupies itself with Bhakti and Gnana. Later, Bhagavad Gita correlates the three and postulates the philosophy of Nishkama Karma. It also contains the 'charama sloka' which holds the seed of Saranagathi or Prapatti. Much later, the southern Acharyas came with their different interpretations and systems of philosophy. Among them, Sri Ramanuja's contribution to Hindu thought is his Visishtadvaitic system of philosophy.

Sri Vedanta Desika who followed Sri Ramanuja a couple of centuries later, gives a complete and comprehensive exposition of Visishtadvaitic thought and tradition in his Rahasyatrayasara. It deals with the doctrines of Ramanuja's system of philosophy and of the religious and spiritual tradition,—sampradaya connected with him. In the very first Mangala Sloka of Saranagati Deepika also, Sri Desika starts with this and calls the tradition of Ramanuja,—“Yatheeswara Mahaanasa Sampradayam” i.e. the tradition flowing out of the kitchen of Sri Ramanuja. He makes it



clear that this Sampradayam is the subject matter of his work 'Saranagathi Deepika' couched in the shape of a hymn to the Lord of Sri, and dedicated to the great ones steeped in the doctrine of Prapatti. And the Slokas that follow are true to this description.

Let us see what it is in a nutshell. There are two ways or Upayas by which the self can get rid of past karma and attain moksha. One is Bhakti which is difficult to practise and too long drawn-out. The other is prapatti which is absolute surrender to the Lord in the knowledge that He takes care of your salvation. While in the former case the means and the end—Upaya and Upeya—are different, in the latter case, they are identical. God who is Upeya, becomes also the Upaya. As such, Prapatti is prescribed for, and can be adopted by, all irrespective of one's status in life and sex. It is universal. It may be truly said that the central purpose of Sri Desika's life is the propagation of Prapatti. That is his avatara rahasyam.

I would like to utter a warning here. Any superficial scrutiny may seem to suggest that the various systems of thought that go by the name of Hinduism are contradictory to one another and even self-contradictory. Far from it. They are only refinements developed in the course of thousands of years and meant to complement and supplement one another. It is remarkable that no founder of a system or exponent of a philosophy—and there is a long line of teachers in Hinduism—has ever claimed exclusive merit or originality for what he says, but, on the other hand, traces his teaching to the eternal source. Such is the variety, beauty and strength of our ancient religion. And Sri Desika, the proponent of prapatti *par excellence*, is one of the most sweet-smelling flowers in the garden of Hinduism.



Lest it should be thought that Prapatti is a short cut to Purushartha, which is eternal service,—Kainkaryam to the Lord and His Consort, Desika warns in sloka 55 that even for doing Prapatti His Mercy should will it and also confer the fruit thereof.

Man revels in his senses. This is true of the general run of mankind. There are also a fortunate few who can be said to revel in self. There is no doubt that the second state is far superior to the first state. But, Sri Desika proclaims there is a third state which is much superior even to the second state and that is to 'revel in Thee' and prays for the conferment of this state on him in sloka 56.

Though Sri Desika appears to plead for himself, in actual fact, he is pleading all the while on behalf of people like us. Sloka 49, which D.R. says is beyond him in his modesty, is enough authority for us to cite and obtain Grace from the Lord. How and why? Because, Sri Desika has already done Prapatti for the benefit not only of his compatriots but generations yet unborn that will follow him. It is our sheet-anchor and magna carta.

I notice a peculiar feature in this stotra—song offering—to Lord Deepaparakasa and His Consort, Marakatavalli Thayar. Sri Desika displays a certain familiarity and intimacy and claim which are not to be found even with reference to his own Lord, Lord Varadaraja. He seems to take liberties with Lord Deepaparakasa. He almost teases Him. Naughty, indeed! Is it due to the fact that both of them hail from the same place!

In short, Saranagathi Deepika is a string of sparkling gems whose many facets can be enjoyed over and over again. Sri D R. with his vast knowledge of Vaishnavite lore, Sanskrit and Tamil, is fully equipped to enlighten us on this



work of Sri Desika. He has commented on other works of Sri Desika before. His commentaries, because they are in English, bring Sri Desika nearer to a class of readers, who may not otherwise have an opportunity of knowing and understanding him. This is a unique service that Sri D.R. is rendering to the asthika community. May Lord Varadaraja bless him and enable him to continue to render such service in future also.

In time, I would like to thank Sri D R. for affording me an opportunity to pay obeisance to the sacred feet of Sri Vedanta Desika in this manner.

3, Sunehri Bagh Road,  
New Delhi.  
2-3-1974.

O.V. ALAGESAN

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श्रीः

## शरणागतिदीपिका

श्रीमान् वेङ्कटनाथार्यः कवितार्किककेसरी ।  
वेदान्ताचार्यवर्यो मे सन्निधत्तां सदा हृदि ॥

पद्मापतेः स्तुतिपदेन विपच्यमानं  
पश्यन्तिवह प्रपदनप्रवणा महान्तः ।  
मद्वाक्यसंवलितमप्यजहत्स्वभावं  
मान्यं यतीश्वरमहानससंप्रदायम् ॥

१

नित्यं श्रिया वसुधया च निषेव्यमाणं  
निर्व्याज निर्भयदयाभरितं विभाति ।  
वेदान्तवेद्यमिह वेगवतीममीपे  
दीपप्रकाश इति दैवतमद्वितीयम् ॥

२

दीपस्त्वमेव जगतां दयिता रुचिस्ते  
दीर्घं तमः प्रतिनिवर्त्यमिदं युवाभ्याम् ।  
स्तव्यं स्तवप्रियमतः शरणोक्तिवश्यं  
स्तोतुं भवन्तमभिलष्यति जन्तुरेषः ॥

३

पद्माकरादुपगता परिषस्वजे त्वां  
वेगासरिद्विहरणा कलशाब्धिकन्या ।  
आहुस्तदा प्रभृति दीपसमावभासम्  
आजानतो मरकतप्रतिमं वपुस्ते ॥

४



स्वामिन् गभीरसुभगं श्रमहारि पुंसां  
 माधुर्यरम्यमनघं मणिभङ्गदृश्यम् ।  
 वेगान्तरे वितनुते प्रतिविम्बशोभां  
 लक्ष्मीसरः सरसिजाश्रयमङ्गकं ते ॥

५

आविश्य धारयसि विश्वममुष्य यन्ता  
 शेषी श्रियः पतिरशेषतनुर्निदानम् ।  
 इत्यादिलक्षणगणैः पुरुषोत्तमं त्वां  
 जानाति यो जगति सर्वविदेष गीतः ॥

६

विश्वं शुभाश्रयवदीश वपुस्त्वदीयं  
 सर्वा गिरस्त्वयि पतन्ति ततोऽसि सर्वः ।  
 सर्वे च वेदविधयस्त्वदनुग्रहार्थाः  
 सर्वाधिकस्त्वमिति तत्त्वविदस्तदाहुः ॥

७

ज्ञानं बलं नियमनक्षमताऽथ वीर्यं  
 शक्तिश्च तेज इति ते गुणषट्कमाद्यम् ।  
 सर्वातिशायिनि हिमोपवनेश यस्मिन्  
 अन्तर्गतो जगदिव त्वयि सद्गुणौघः ॥

८

दीपावभास दयया विधिपूर्वमेतत्  
 विश्वं विधाय निगमानपि दत्तवन्तम् ।  
 शिष्यायिताः शरणयन्ति मुमुक्षवस्त्वाम्  
 आद्यं गुरुं गुरुपरंपरयाऽधिगम्यम् ॥

९



सत्तास्थितिप्रयतनप्रमुखैरुपात्तं  
स्वार्थं सदैव भवता स्वयमेव विश्वम् ।  
दीपप्रकाश तदिह त्वदवाप्तये त्वाम्  
अव्याजसिद्धमनपायम् उपायमाहुः ॥

१०

भोग्यं मुकुन्द गुणभेदमचेतनेषु  
भोक्तृत्वमात्मनि निवेश्य निजेच्छयैव ।  
पाञ्चालिकाशुकविभूषणभोगदायी  
सम्प्राडिवात्मसमया सह मोदसे त्वम् ॥

११

त्वां मातरं च पितरं सहजं निवासं  
सन्तः समेत्य शरणं सुहृदं गतिं च ।  
निःसीमनित्यनिरवद्यसुखप्रकाशं  
दीपप्रकाश सविभूतिगुणं विशन्ति ॥

१२

जन्तोरमुष्य जनने विधिशम्भुदृष्टौ  
रागादिनेव रजसा तमसा च योगः ।  
द्वैपायनप्रभृतयस्त्वदवेक्षितानां  
सत्त्वं विमुक्तिनियतं भवतीत्युच्यन्ति ॥

१३

कर्मस्वनादिविषमेषु समो दयालुः  
स्वेनैव क्लृप्तमपदेशमवेक्षमाणः ।  
स्वप्राप्तये तनुमृतां त्वरसे मुकुन्द  
स्वाभाविकं तव सुहृत्त्वमिदं गृणन्ति ॥

१४



निद्रायितान् निगमवर्त्मनि चारुदर्शी  
 प्रस्थानशक्तिसहितान् प्रतिबोध्य जन्तून् ।  
 जीर्णस्तनन्धयजडान्धमुखानिवास्मान्  
 नेतुं मुकुन्द यतसे दयया सह त्वम् ॥

भक्तिः प्रपत्तिरथ वा भगवंस्तदुक्तिः  
 तन्निष्ठसंश्रय इतीव विकल्प्यमानम् ।  
 यं कंचिदेकमुपपादयता त्वयैव  
 तातास्तरन्त्यवसरे भविनो भवाब्धिम् ॥

नानाविधैरकपटैरजहत्स्वभावैः  
 अप्राकृतैर्निजविहारवशेन सिद्धैः ।  
 आत्मीयरक्षणविपक्षविनाशनार्थैः  
 संस्थापयस्यनवजन्मभिर्गाद्यधर्मम् ॥

निम्नोन्नतानि निखिलानि पदानि गाढं  
 मज्जन्ति ते महिमसागरशीकरेषु ।  
 नीरन्ध्रमाश्रयसि नीचजनांस्तथापि  
 शीलेन हन्त शिशिरोपवनेश्वर त्वम् ॥

काशी-वृकान्धक-शरासन-बाण-गङ्गा-  
 संभूतिनाम-कृति-संवदनाद्युदन्तैः ।  
 स्वोक्त्यम्बरीपभयशापमुखैश्च शम्भुं  
 त्वभिन्नमीक्षितवतामिह कः शरण्यः ॥



क्वासौ विभुः क वयमित्युपसत्तिभीतान्  
जन्तून् क्षणात् त्वदनुवृत्तिषु योग्ययन्ती ।  
संप्राप्तसद्गुरुतनोः समये दयालोः  
आत्मावधिर्भवति शिक्षितधीः क्षणं ते ॥

२०

योग्यं यमैश्च नियमैश्च विधाय चित्तं  
सन्तो जितासनतया स्ववशासुवर्गाः ।  
प्रत्याहृतेन्द्रियगणाः स्थिरधारणास्त्वां  
ध्यात्वा समाधियुगलेन विलोकयन्ति ॥

२१

पद्माभिरामवदनेक्षणपाणिपादं  
दिव्यायुधाभरणमाल्यविलेपनं त्वाम् ।  
योगेन नाथ शुभमाश्रयमात्मवन्तः  
सालम्बनेन परिचिन्त्य न यान्ति तृप्तिम् ॥

२२

मानातिलङ्घिसुखबोधमहाम्बुराशौ  
मग्रास्त्रिसीमरहिते भवतः स्वरूपे ।  
तापत्रयेण विहर्ति न भजन्ति भूयः  
संसारधर्मजनितेन समाधिमन्तः ॥

२३

धीसंस्कृतान् विदधतामिह कर्मभेदान्  
शुद्धं जिते मनसि चिन्तयतां स्वमेकम् ।  
त्वत्कर्मसक्तमनसामपि चापरेषां  
छते फलान्यभिमत्तानि भवान् प्रसजः ॥

२४



उद्धाहुभावमपहाय यथैव स्वर्गः

प्रांशुं फलार्थमभियाचति योगिचिन्त्य ।

एवं सुदुष्करमुपायगणं विहाय

स्थाने निवेशयति तस्य विचक्षणस्त्वाम् ॥

२५

नित्यालसार्हमभयं निरपेक्षमन्यैः

विश्वाधिकारमखिलाभिमतप्रसूतिम् ।

शिक्षाविशेषसुभगं व्यवसायसिद्धाः

सत्कुर्वते त्वयि मुकुन्द षडङ्गयोगम् ॥

२६

त्वत्प्रातिकूल्यविमुखाः स्फुरदानुकूल्याः

कृत्वा पुनः कृपणतां विगतातिशङ्काः ।

स्वामिन् भव स्वयमुपाय इतीरयन्तः

त्वय्यर्पयन्ति निजभारमपारशक्तौ ॥

२७

अर्थान्तरेषु विमुखान् अधिकारहानेः

श्रद्धाधिकांस्त्वदनुभूतिविलम्बभीतान् ।

दीपप्रकाश लभसे सुचिरात् कृतीव

न्यस्तात्मनस्तव पदे निभृतान् प्रपन्नान् ॥

२८

मन्त्रैरनुश्रवमुखेष्वधिगम्यमानैः

स्वाधिक्रियासमुचितैर्यदि वाऽन्यवाक्यैः ।

नाथ त्वदीयचरणौ शरणं गतानां

नैवायुतायुतकलाऽप्यपरैरवाप्या ॥

२९



दत्ताः प्रजा जनकवत् तव देशिकेन्द्रैः

पत्याऽभिनन्द्य भवता परिणीयमानाः ।

मध्ये सतां महितभोगविशेषसिद्धयै

माङ्गल्यसूत्रमिव विभ्रति किङ्करत्वम् ॥

३०

दिव्ये पदे नियतकिङ्करताधिराज्यं

दातुं त्वदीयदयया विहिताभिषेकाः ।

आदेहपातमनघाः परिचर्यया ते

युञ्जानचिन्त्य युवराजपदं भजन्ति ॥

३१

त्वां पाञ्चरात्रिकनयेन पृथग्विधेन

वैखानसेन च पथा नियताधिकाराः ।

संज्ञाविशेषनियमेन समर्चयन्तः

प्रीत्या नयन्ति फलवन्ति दिनानि धन्याः ॥

३२

वर्णाश्रमादिनियतक्रमसूत्रबद्धा

भक्त्या यथार्हविनिवेशितपत्रपुष्पा ।

मालेव कालविहिता हृदयङ्गमा त्वाम्

आमोदयत्यनुपरागधियां सपर्या ॥

३३

ब्रह्मा गिरीश इतरेऽप्यमरा य एते

निर्धूय तान् निरयतुल्यफलप्रसूतीन् ।

प्राप्तुं तवैव पदपद्मयुगं प्रतीताः

पातिव्रतीं त्वयि वहन्ति षरावरज्जाः ॥

३४



नाथ त्वदिष्टविनियोगविशेषसिद्धं  
 शेषत्वसारमनपेक्ष्य निजं गुणज्ञाः ।  
 भक्तेषु ते वरगुणार्णव पारतन्त्र्यान्  
 दास्यं भजन्ति विपणिव्यवहारयोग्यम् ॥

सद्भिस्त्वदेकशरणैर्नियतं सनाथाः  
 सर्पादिवत् त्वदपराधिषु दूरयाताः ।  
 धीरास्तृणीकृतविग्रिश्चपुरन्दराद्याः  
 कालं क्षिपन्ति भगवन् करणैरवन्ध्यैः ॥

वागादिकं मनसि तत् पवने सजीवे  
 भूतेष्वयं पुनरसौ त्वयि तैः समेति ।  
 साधारणोत्क्रमणकर्म समाश्रितानां  
 यन्त्रा मृकुन्द भवतैव यथा यमादेः ॥

सव्यान्ययोरयनयोर्निशि वासरे वा  
 सङ्कल्पितायुरवधीन् सपदि प्रपन्नान् ।  
 हार्दः स्वयं निजपदे विनिवेशयिष्यन्  
 नाडीं प्रवेशयसि नाथ शताधिकां त्वम् ॥

अर्चिर्दिनं विशदपक्ष उदक्प्रयाणं  
 संवत्सरो मरुदशीतकाः शशाङ्कः ।  
 मौदामनी जलपतिर्वलजित् प्रजेशः  
 इत्यातिबाहिकमुखो नयसि स्वकीयान् ॥



त्वच्छेषवृत्त्यनुगुणैर्महितैर्गुणौघैः

आविर्भवत्ययुतसिद्धनिजस्वरूपे ।

त्वल्लक्षणेषु नियतेष्वपि भोगमात्रे

साम्यं भजन्ति परमं भवता विमुक्ताः ॥

४०

इत्थं त्वदेकशरणैरनघैरवाप्ये

त्वत्किङ्करत्वविभवे स्पृहयाऽपराध्यन् ।

आत्मा ममेति भगवन् भवतैव गीता

वाचो निरीक्ष्य भरणीय इह त्वयाऽहम् ॥

४१

पद्मामहीप्रभृतिभिः परिभुक्तभूम्नः

का हानिरत्र मयि भोक्तरि ते भवित्री ।

दृष्येत् किमङ्घ्रितटिनी तव देवसेव्या

दुर्वारतर्पचपलेन शुनाऽवलीढा ॥

४२

सत्त्वानि नाथ विविधान्यभिसज्जिघृक्षोः

संसारनाट्यरसिकस्य तवास्तु तृप्त्यै ।

प्रत्यक्पराङ्मुखमतेरसमीक्ष्यकर्तुः

प्राचीनसज्जनविडम्बनभूमिका मे ॥

४३

कर्तव्यमित्यनुकलं कलयाम्यकृत्यं

स्वामिन्नकृत्यमिति कृत्यमपि त्यजामि ।

अन्यद्द्वयतिक्रमणजातमनन्तमर्थ-

स्थाने दया भवतु ते मयि सार्वभौमी ॥

४४



यं पूर्वमाश्रितजनेषु भवान् यथावत्  
 धर्मे परं प्रणिजगौ स्वयमानुशंस्यम् ।  
 संस्मारितस्त्वमसि तस्य शरण्यभावात्  
 नाथ त्वदात्तसमया ननु मादृशार्थम् ॥

ह्वाणं भवेति सकृदुक्तिसमुद्यतानां  
 तैस्तैरसह्यवृजिनैरुदरं भरिस्ते ।  
 सत्यापिता शतमखात्मजशङ्करादौ  
 नाथ क्षमा न खलु जन्तुषु मद्विवर्जम् ॥

कर्मादिषु त्रिषु कथां कथमप्यजानन्  
 कामादिभेदुरतया कलुषप्रवृत्तिः ।  
 साक्रेतसंभवचराचरजन्तुनीत्या  
 वीक्ष्यः प्रभो विषयवासितयाऽप्यहं ते ॥

ब्रह्माण्डलक्षशतकोटिगणाननन्तान्  
 एकक्षणे विपरिवर्त्य विलज्जमानाम् ।  
 मत्पापराशिमथने मधुदर्पहन्त्रीं  
 शक्तिं नियुङ्क्ष्व शरणागतवत्सल त्वम् ॥

आस्तां प्रपत्तिरिह देशिकसाक्षिका मे  
 सिद्धा तदुक्तिरनघा त्वदपेक्षितार्था ।  
 न्यस्तस्य पूर्वनिष्पन्नैस्त्वयि नन्विदानीं  
 पूर्णे मुकुन्द पुनरुक्त उपाय एषः ॥



यद्वा मदर्थपरिचिन्तनया तवालं  
 संज्ञां प्रपन्न इति साहसिको विभर्मि ।  
 एवं स्थिते त्वदपवादनिवृत्तये मां  
 पात्नीकुरुष्व भगवन् भवतः कृपायाः ॥

५०

त्यागे गुणेश शरणागतसंज्ञिनो मे  
 स्त्यानागसोऽपि सहस्रैव परिग्रहे वा ।  
 किं नाम कुत्र भवतीति कृपादिभिस्ते  
 गूढं निरूपय गुणेतगतारतम्यम् ॥

५१

स्वामी दयाजलनिधिर्मधुरः क्षमावान्  
 शीलाधिकः भित्तवशः शुचिरत्युदारः ।  
 एतानि हातुमनघो न किलार्हंसि त्वं  
 विख्यातिमन्ति विरुदानि मया सहैव ॥

५२

वेलाधनञ्जयरथादिषु वाचिकैः स्वैः  
 आघोषितमखिलजन्तु शरण्यतां ते ।  
 जानन् दशाननशतादधिकागसोऽपि  
 पश्यामि दत्तमभयं स्वकृते त्वया मे ॥

५३

रक्ष्यस्त्वया तव भरोऽस्म्यहमित्यपूर्वान्  
 वर्णानिमानहृदयानपि वाचयित्वा ।  
 मदोपनिर्जितगुणो महिषीसमक्षं  
 मा भूस्त्वदन्य इव मोघपरिभ्रमस्त्वम् ॥

५४



मुख्यं च यत्प्रपदनं स्वयमेव साध्यं  
 दातव्यमीश कृपया तदपि त्वयैव ।  
 तन्मे भवच्चरणसङ्गवतीमवस्थां  
 यपशुभायफलयोरुचितं विधेयाः ॥

५५

अल्पास्थिरैः सुकरैरसुखावसानैः  
 दुःखान्वितैरनुचितैरभिमानमूलैः ।  
 प्रत्यक्परागनुभवैः परिघूर्णितं मां  
 त्वय्येव नाथ चरितार्थय निर्विविधम् ॥

५६

तत्त्वावबोधशमितप्रतिकूलवृत्तिं  
 कैङ्कर्यलब्धकरणत्रयसामरस्यम् ।  
 कृत्वा त्वदन्यविमुखं कृपया स्वयं मां  
 स्फातिं दृशोः प्रतिलभस्व जगज्जनन्याः ॥

५७

इत्थं स्तुतिप्रमृतयो यदि संमताः स्युः  
 यद्वापराधपदवीष्वभिसंविशन्ति ।  
 स्तोकानुकूल्यकणिकावशवर्तिनस्ते  
 प्रीतिक्षमाप्रसरयोरहमस्मि लक्ष्यम् ॥

५८

स्नेहोपपन्नविषयः स्वदशाविशेषात्  
 भूयस्तमिस्रशमनीं भुवि वेङ्कटेशः ।  
 दिव्यां स्तुतिं निगमिमीत सतां नयोगात्  
 दीपप्रकाशशरणागतिदीपिकाख्याम् ॥

५९

कविताक्रिकसिंहाय कल्याणगुणशालिने ।  
 श्रोमते वेङ्कटेशाय वेदान्तगुरवे नमः ।



# SARANAGATI DEEPIKA of VEDANTA DESIKA

ஸ்ரீமாந் வேங்கடநாதார்ய: கவிதார்க்கிககேஸரி |  
வேதாந்தாசார்யவர்யோ மே ஸந்நிதத்தாம் ஸதா  
ஹ்ருதி ||

## INTRODUCTORY

This is a Stotra or hymn of Vedanta Desika in praise of Lord Deepaparakasa presiding over the sacred shrine celebrated by the Alvars as திருத்தண்கா in Kancheepuram. Desika's birthplace (Avatarasthala) is known as Tooppul, and that is adjacent to Tirutthanka. Lord Deepaparakasa enjoyed by the Alvars as விளக்கொளி is thus the Emberuman adorning Desika's Avatarasthala, and the gratitude, love, fondness and devotion that Swamy Desika entertained towards this Lord are all amply in evidence in this Stotra.

Lord Varadaraja whose shrine is situate about a mile to the East of Lord Deepaparakasa's shrine, was of course Desika's personal God who was everything to him. Next only to the infatuation for Him, Desika's regard, reverence, love and fervour towards Deepaparakasa are of a very high order.

This Stotra consists of 59 slokas. (A 60th sloka found in some editions has not been accepted by commentators as authentic.) The name "Saranagati Deepika" has been given to the Stotra by Desika himself. It means the Light (lamp) of Saranagati or Surrender. This is one of several treatises on the Doctrine of Surrender (Prapatthi) to enunciate and



establish which Desika came into the world. He is rightly known as Prapadana-kalaa-janma-jaladhih in Sanskrit, and தஞ்சப் பரகதியைத் தந்தருள்வோன் in Tamil. Nyasa Dasakam, Nyasa Vimsati and Nyasa Tilakam are the other Stotras of Desika on the same subject. Each of these stresses particular aspects pertaining to that doctrine. In this Saranagati Deepika we find Desika re-stating in the form of Sanskrit slokas the doctrine of Prapathi elaborately dealt with in what is Desika's *magnum opus* Srimad Rahasyatraya Sara. This Stotra may well be said to be an epitome in verse of Rahasyatraya Sara. As usual, poetic excellence, philosophic sublimity and devotional fervour contained in this Stotra vie with one another in capturing our artistic taste, intellectual quest and fervent devotion.

### Sloka-1.

பத்மாபதே: ஸ்துதிபதேந விபச்யமாநம்  
 பஸ்யந்த்விஹ ப்ரபதநப்ரவணு மஹாந்த: |  
 மத்வாக்யஸம்வலிதமப்யஜஹத்ஸ்வபாவம்  
 மாநயம் யதீஸ்வரமஹாநஸஸம்ப்ரதாயம் || (1)

Let the great ones devoted to the doctrine of prapadana look here at this treatise on the highly praiseworthy tradition (Sampradayam) of (that emanated from) the Kitchen of the King of Yatis (Ramanuja), which is not divested of its nature despite its being mingled with my words, and which is cooked as (dressed in the garb of) a hymn in praise of the Consort of Padma (Lakshmi).



This is the Mangalasloka for the Stotra. Note how it begins most auspiciously with the name of Padma, Lakshmi, who is மங்களம் மங்களாநாம் (Sri Stuti, sloka 1.)



Padmaapati is Sriman Narayana. Sri and Narayana together form the ultimate truth—Paratattva. 'Mat' (மத்) in the compound word Srima (d) n-Narayana denotes the nitya sambandham or eternal association of Sri and Narayana. Nityaanapaayam dwandvam (sloka 5 of Sri Stuti) a Couple never apart from each other. The Tamil word 'திருமால்' used by the Alwars pointedly brings out the equality in all respects between Tiru and Maal, much more unambiguously than the Sanskrit words श्रीयः पति, श्रीमन्नारायण, and Padmaapati. As we shall see later, Desika stresses and emphasises the aprthak-siddha (inseparable) nature of the union.

This Stotra is conceived and sung as a hymn in praise of that Divya Dampati, Divine Couple, while it is really a dissertation on யதீஸ்வரமஹானல ஸம்பந்தாயம். Sampradayam is traditional doctrine. As this tradition originated from the Mahaanasam (Kitchen) of Yatiraja, it is referred to as Yatecswara Mabanasa Sampradayam. Readers may remember how when an attempt to mix poison with food prepared for Ramanuja came to light, Ramanuja's Acharya laid a command on Ramanuja not to take food prepared by anyone but his chief disciple Pranatartihara, better known as Kidambi Achchan (கிடாம்பி ஆச்சான்.) So this great disciple came to be associated with Ramanuja's kitchen. As he was the repository of the Rahasya Sampradayam of Acharya Ramanuja, it has come to be known as மஹானல ஸம்பந்தாயம். Desika refers proudly to this Sampradayam by this name in several places in his works. In the Nigamanadhikara of Srimad Rahasyatraya Sara he sings இதி யதிராஜ மஹானல பரிமள பரிவாஹ வாஸிதாம்பிபத...ஸுதாம். Drink this nectar fragrant with the overflowing smell of Yatiraja's kitchen.) In the first verse of Paramapada Sopanam (Tamil Prabandham) Desika refers to எதிவரனார் மடைப்பள்ளி வந்த மணம் எங்கள் வார்த்தையுள் மன்னியதே. (The fragrance emanating from Yatiraja's kitchen imbue, and is



dedicated in, our words.) In sloka 9 of Nyasa Tilaka, Desika gratefully acknowledges as one of the great benefits he has been blessed with by Lord Ranganatha, his getting as his Acharya (preceptor) the great-grandson of that "Maahaanasiko Mahaan" of Yatipati. And here it is யதீஸ்வரமஹாநஸைம்ப்ரதாயம். (Everywhere Ramanuja is referred to as Yatiraja, Yateeswara, Yatipati, etc. They all have the same meaning. Desika is very fond of referring to that great Acharya by this name as we can see from Yatiraja Saptati. Very rarely does Desika use the name Ramanuja, which by the way, had fascinated Tiruvarangattamudanaar, the author of Ramanuja Nootrandadi.

Sri Bhashyakara's prefatory sloka to his Sri Bhashya referred to பாராஸர்ய வசஸ்ஸுதாம்.....பௌமா: பிபந்து அந்வஹம். 'Let the men of the world daily drink the nectar of the words of the son of Parasara (Vyasa)'. In the Rahasyatraya Sara sloka quoted above it was also ஸுதாம் பிபத (drink the nectar). In the Tamil verse it was fragrance மணம் to be enjoyed by the nose. Here however it is மஹாந்த: பஸ்யந்து. Let the great ones see. பஸ்யந்து = பார்க்கட்டும் And al's காண் (see) may be thought of here. புள்ளும் சிலம் பினகாண்: கோழி அழைத்தன காண்; குயிலினங்கள் கூவின காண்: காண் in all these meaning 'hear and note.' So too let Mahaantah hear this Stotra and take note of it. For, here the மஹாநஸைம்ப்ரதாயம் has been given the garb of a hymn in praise of Padmaapati. Vipachyamaanam = cooked (i. e.,) made in the form of. The Mahaanasa idea is kept up.

If Sri Bhashyakara dedicated his Sri Bhashya to the Devas inhabiting the earth (Bhaumaah Sumanasah-பௌமா: ஸுமநஸ:) Desika dedicates this stotra about a great sampradaya only to some among them ப்ரபதநப்ரவணு மஹாந்த:—those great ones who are favourably disposed towards, nay, devoted to, the doctrine of Prapadana or Prapathi. Desika



has elsewhere referred to them as “சரணுகதி யென்னும் சார்வுடன் மற்றொன்றை அரணுகக் கொள்ளாதார்”.

It is for their enjoyment and edification that Desika begins to sing this stotra. Inferentially we can understand that this stotra is not intended to educate or correct persons who are averse or allergic to the doctrine of Prapatthi, though they may pay lip sympathy to it. The stotra has been conceived and sung only for the benefit of அஸ்மத் தேசிக ஸம்பந்தாய நிஷ்டர்கள்.

The third quarter of the sloka is couched in an apologetic tone. I am going to talk about a Maanyam Sampradaya—a great and honoured tradition. I know my unworthiness for the task; nevertheless I go ahead because I know for certain that it will not lose its Himalayan grandeur by being mingled with my words. (1)

### Sloka. 2.

நித்யம் ஸ்ரீயா வஸுதயா ச நிஷேவ்யமாணம்  
நிர்வ்யாஜநிர்ப்பரதயாபரிதம் விபாதி |  
வேதாந்தவேத்யமிஹ வேகவதிஸமீபே  
தீபப்ரகாஸ இதி தைவதமத்விதீயம் || (2)

That peerless Deity (without a second) ever attended and waited upon by Lakshmi-devi and Bhoomi-devi, who is laden (full) with innate (cause-less) and enormous Daya (Grace), who is knowable (only) by Vedanta, shines here near the river Vegavati with the name Deepa-Prakasa.

This sloka describes the Padmaapati of the first sloka by referring to His Paratva (transcendental glory) and Saulabhya (easy accessibility) and also tells us where we can find Him and under what name.



This is an adviteeyam Daivatam—a non-pareil Deity, one without a second. ஒத்தார்மிக்காரையிலையாய் He is Vedanta Vedyam—knowable only by and through Vedanta. (வேததக் வேத்ய) The words of the sloka remind us of the Lord's own declaration in the Bhagavat Gita வேதை; ச ஸர்வை; அஹமேவ வேத்ய:

The opening words of the sloka describe Him in the language employed by the second anuvaka of Purusha-sook-tam: “ஹ்ரீ, ச தே லக்ஷ்மீ: ச பத்ந்யௌ-அஹோராத்ரே பார்ஸுவே” Always—(நித்யம்) day time or night time, His wives ஹ்ரீ (Bhoo devi) and Lakshmi are on His two sides and wait on Him. This is another feature of His Paratvam (transcendental glory). In fact லக்ஷ்மீபதித்வம் is a Brahma-lakshanam, *sine qua non* of the Supreme Being.

As a consequence of the unceasing association with Sri (Lakshmi) and Vasudha (Bhoomi) He is நிர்வ்யாஜநிர்ப் பரதயாபரிதம். His Daya is inherent in Him and does not depend on any cause or adventitious circumstance. It is there always, unconditioned, unlimited and illimitable. This is because Lakshmi is always by His side.

His Daya is நிர்ப்பரா abundant, excessive and never-failing. This is because of Bhoomi Devi who helps the unimpeded flow of Grace by invoking His Kshama or quality of forbearance. தத்க்ருபாப்ரதிகாதாநாம் க்ஷமயா வாரணம் யயா, removing the obstacles in the way of the flow of Daya by Kshama (பொறுமை) (Dayasatakam sloka-7). Thus the Lord is full to the brim (பரிதம்) of நிர்வ்யாஜ and நிர் ப்பரதயா.

Such a great God shines here (இஹ விபாதி) i. e., in this world and near the River Vegavati in Kanchi, and that is His Saulabhya—easy accessibility.



He is here with the name Deepa-prakasa. This is only a Sanskrit of “விளக்கொளி” the name given to this Lord by Tirumangai Alwar in the 14th verse of Thiruneduntandagam. The Sthala is named திருத்தண்கா in the same verse, தண்கா meaning a cool grove. Nammalwar has referred to this shrine as அம்பூந் தேனிளம் சோலை in verse 26 of his Tiruviruttham.

There appears to be a reading அஸ்மதீயம் in place of அத்னிதீயம். Our கைவலம் will be the meaning then, the God adorning Desika's birthplace and regarded by Desika as our God—probably the Kuladeivam of his ancestors. (2)

### Sloka-3.

திபஸ்த்வமேவ ஜகதாம் தயிதா ருசிஸ்தே  
 தீர்க்கம் தம: ப்ரதிநிவர்த்தயமிதம் யுவாப்யாம் |  
 ஸ்தவ்யம் ஸ்தவப்ரியமத: ஸரணோக்திவஸ்யம்  
 ஸ்தோதும் பவந்தமபிலஷ்யதி ஜந்துரேஷ: || (3)

Thou alone art the lamp of this world; Thy Consort (Lakshmi) is the lustre (of that lamp). By the two of you alone this long (originless and endless) darkness can be dispelled. This being i.e. myself is very desirous of praising Thee who art fit to be praised, who art extremely (superlatively) fond of being praised, and who art won over by the utterance of the word *sarana* ஸரண, signifying that Thou art sought after as refuge.

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The connotation of the name of the Lord, Deepa-Prakasa, is given here. The Lord is the Lamp and His Lady (Consort-Lakshmi) the lustre (சுடர்) of that lamp. Together the Two of them drive out the darkness of ignorance which



has been there for a long time. Ignorance can be utter inability to know anything, or understanding in a wrong way. அஞ்ஞானம், அந்யதாஜ்ஞானம் and விபரீத ஜ்ஞானம். All these three kinds of ignorance of the world (darkness) are dispelled by this lustrous lamp.

It is not difficult to see the suggestion intended by the description of the Lord as the Lamp and of Lakshmi as lustre. Mere Narayana is like an unlighted lamp--ஏற்றாத விளக்கு. In association with Lakshmi, Narayana is a lustrous lamp (ஏற்றின விளக்கு) and hence is a light in its full sense. And so, He is திருமால். Only a Vedanta Desika can boldly sing thus. The விளக்கு can be a விளக்கு only if it furnishes விளக்கம் (knowledge of objects). The idea is not new, for we find Valmiki making Rama say about Sita அநந்யாஸி மயா ஸீதா பாஸ்கரேணப்ரபாயதா; he makes Sita express the same sentiment in the words அநந்யா ராகவேணஹம் பாஸ்கரேணப்ரபாயதா. The Lord if we can conceive of Him apart from Lakshmi will be a Sun without its brightness. He becomes a ப்ரபாவாந் only because of Lakshmi ஸீதயாதேவ்யா. Therefore it is that this Lord is known as விளக்கொளி எம்பெருமான். This idea is made more explicit in the next sloka.

I am eager to praise such a Lord. I know my incompetence and yet have begun to praise Him emboldened by three traits of His.

The first is that He is Stavyah (ஸ்தவ்ய:) fit to be praised. Stavyah (ஸ்தவ்ய:) is one of the names of the Lord in the Sahasranamam (684). It means one who is praised by one and all. One who deserves to be praised. Whatever greatness and glory are attributed to Him by those who praise Him, all of them are true and apt, as per Parasara Bhattar's interpretation.



Secondly, He is a ஸ்தவப்ரிய: fond of being praised. Bhishma sang in the Sahasranama that the Lord is a ஸ்தவப்ரிய: (685) Parasara Bhattar's elucidation of this name is to the effect that anyone praising the Lord in any language and in whatever manner he may choose, will have his praises appreciated by the Lord who will not even look into their grammar or diction or their appropriateness or otherwise. His love of, or desire for, praise is that much. This quality of God naturally emboldens a devotee to praise Him, though he has no capacity to praise. Did not the Lord touch the cheek of child Dhruva with His conch just to enable that child to praise, so that He can enjoy that praise? Therefore Desika says ஸ்தோதும் அபிவாஞ்சதி ஜந்து ரேஷ: This being (ஜந்து) keenly desires to praise you. அபிலஷ்யதி, same meaning.

The third and last is that the Lord is ஸரணோக்திவஸ்ய: One conquered by the utterance of the word ஸரணம் (You are my refuge. I seek refuge in you.) This is another trait in the Lord calculated to induce one to praise the Lord. For, the moment we declare that we have sought His protection, He will thereafter see no fault in our praise, either in sound or sentiment.

Sloka 7 of Devanayaka Panchasat may profitably be referred to here. There also the names ஸ்தவ்ய: ஸ்தவப்ரிய: and also ஸ்தோதா from the Sahasranamam are incorporated and the Lord is requested to see that those names are not tarnished. "Vouchsafe to us suitable words."

Here also the sloka is conceived as an அவையடக்கம் or giving expression to one's unworthiness for a task, the task of singing His praises here. (3)

Sloka-4:

பத்மாகராதுபகதா பரிஷஸ்வஜே த்வாம்  
வேகாஸரித்விஹரண கலஸாப்திகந்யா |  
ஆஹுஸ்ததா ப்ரப்ருதி தீபஸமாவபாஸம்  
ஆஜாநதோ மரதகப்ரதிமம் வபுஸ்தே |



When the Daughter of the Ocean of Milk (desirous of) sporting in the waters of the River Vegavati, emerged from the Lotus tank and embraced Thee, from then onwards people say that Thy natural emerald-like Tirumeni shines with the lustre like that of a Deepa (light).

The expression தீபஸ்த்வமேவ ஜகதாம் தயிதா ருசிஸ்தே used in the previous sloka is explained here. When Lakshmi embraces the Lord's marataka (emerald-like) Tirumeni, Her lustre which is that of molten gold (தத்தஜாம்பூநதாபா) invests the Lord's Tirumeni with a glow like that of Deepa (light). Thus the ruchi or lustre is due to Lakshmi.

The Sthalapurana relating to this shrine, it appears, refers to Lakshmi emerging out of a tank within the temple (to the north of the main shrine) going by the name of Padmaakara (லக்ஷ்மீஸரஸ்), and getting wedded to the Lord. When once upon a time Lakshmi came out of Ksheerabdhī (Milk ocean-பாற்கடல்) it was said of Her பஸ்யதாம் ஸர்வதேவாநாம் யயள வக்ஷஸ்தலம் ஹரே: Similarly on emerging from the Padmaakara She wedded the Lord by embracing Him.

That accounts for the glow of Gold which makes the Lord's Tirumeni a பொன்மேனி. The Upanishad describes Him as Gold to His finger-tips (nails) ஆப்ரணகாத் ஸர்வ ஏவஸுவர்ண: How does it come about that the Emerald like Tirumeni (Body) of the Lord shines with a golden hue? The answer to this question was first furnished by Peyalwar, a Seer in the true sense of that term because he saw and says he saw. திருக்கண்டேன் பொன்மேனி கண்டேன். I saw Thiru first; then I saw a gold-coloured Body. Ultimately he tells us that he saw them all in His Ocean-hued one—என் ஆழி வண்ணன் பால். Vedanta Desika in this sloka refers to Alwar's ஆழிவண்ணன் as ஆஜாநத: மரதகூப்ரதீமம் வபு: with body whose natural colour is that of the green emerald. By Lakshmi's embrace a golden glow lights up that emerald.



Peyalwar in a later verse of his Third Tiruvandadi refers to how Lakshmi lights up the Lord like lightning lighting up the clouds. பொலிந்திருண்ட கார்வானில் மின்னே போல் தோன்றி மலிந்து திரு இருந்த மார்பன்.

Tirumangai Alwar in verse 14 of Tirunedunthandagam has sung விளக்கொளியை மரதகத்தை as being in திருத் தண்கா. This sloka embodies both those appellations மரதகப்ரதிமம் வபு; and தீபஸமாவபாஸம்.

The name of the Thayar in this shrine is Maratakavalli. Some have interpreted Alwar's மரதகத்தை as a reference to Thayar. So too about Tirupputkuzhhi, Alwar sang in Peria Thirumadal மரதகத்தைப் புட்குழி யெம்போரேற்றை. The name of the Thayar in that shrine is also Maratakavalli. ஆஹு: So they say. Who? Those who are in the know of things, having studied the Upanishadic references like லீலதோயதமத்யஸ்த வித்யுல்லேகா etc., and Prabandha verses like those cited above. (4)

### Sloka. 5.

ஸ்வாமிந் கபீரஸுபகம் ஸ்ரமஹாரிபும்ஸாம்  
மாதூர்யரம்யமநகம் மணிபங்கத்ருஸ்யம் |  
வேகாந்தரே விதநுதே ப்ரதிபிம்பஸோபாம்  
லக்ஷ்மீஸர: ஸரஸிஜாஸ்ரயமங்ககம் தே ||

My Lord and Liege! Lakshmi-saras (Padmakara tank) deep and lovely, capable of banishing men's fatigue and exhaustion (when they bathe therein), beautiful because of the sweet taste (of its waters,) completely faultless (pure), charming to look at like a broken bit of an emerald, and the resort for lotus.

(another meaning)

Thy Tirumeni of unfathomable loveliness, capable of dispelling the distress and grief of men (who resort to Thee as refuge), sweet and enjoyable, bereft of all evil, charming to



look at like a broken bit of an emerald, and the seat of Lakshmi, gets gloriously reflected in the centre of the River Vegavati, and lends lustre thereto.

The Lord's Blue-sapphire-like Tirumeni as embraced by golden-hued Lakshmi was enjoyed in the previous sloka. In this Sloka that same Tirumeni is enjoyed as a Lotus tank ஸரஸிஜாஸ்ரய named லக்ஷ்மீஸரஸ் (Padmakara). It was Nammalwar that first started comparing the Lord with a Lotus tank, தாமரை நீள் வாசத்தடம் (மாயக் கூத்தா இரு-வாய்மொழி 8-5-1.) The Alwar beacons to the Lord to come to him like a fragrant lotus tank with pure and red lotus flowers in the form of eyes, hands and legs, with a bud in the shape of the coral-lipped mouth, and whole body like the lotus leaf, -green. Tirumangai Alwar refers to bathing in a பொற்றாமரைக்கயம் in Tiruneduntandagam-Verse 19. The famous Mukundamala sloka beginning with the words கரசரண ஸரோஜே enjoys in detail the several features of this Hari-saras. This way of enjoying the Lord's Tirumeni has appealed to Swamy Desika also so much that he has sung about it in three different ways in three different stotras of his. In Devanayaka Parchasat sloka 9, he refers to his mind having taken a plunge into that deep pure and sweet tank (Lord Devanatha) like a person entering into a cool tank during summer. கம்பீரபுண்யமதுரம் மம தீ: பவந்தம் க்ரீஷ்மே தடாகமிவ சீதமநுப்ரவிஷ்டா. In Daya Sataka, -sloka-43, again, Desika enjoys how Srinivasa is Daya Devi's Deerghika—a long pool, a swimming pool for Daya Devi. Here in this stotra he again revels in the same idea employing slesha describing by the same words Lakshmi Saras as also Lord Deepaparakasa's Tirumeni. The one reflects the other and Desika enjoys that ப்ரதிபிம்ப சோபை. Which is the பிம்பம் (object) and which the ப்ரதி பிம்பம் (reflection) we have to find out for ourselves. Added to this, both probably get reflected in the waters of Vegavathi for it is there that the சோபை or lustre is spread. Six epithets are used in this



sloka each of which describes the Lotus Tank as well as the Lord's Tirumeni.

(1) Gabheera Subhagam—Deep and beautiful. The Tank is beautiful because of its depth. The Lord's Tirumeni is deeply beautiful i.e., defies analysis or description.

(2) Sramahaari-pumsaam—dispelling the fatigue of men. The tank removes the weariness of people who take a dip into it. So too the Lord's Tirumeni wipes out all grief, worry and distress of men who plunge into its beauty—நீராடுதல் as per Goda's Upanishad, Tiruppavai. Vide also ஏஷ ப்ரஹ்ம ப்ரவிஷ்டோஸ்மி க்ரீஷ்மே சீதமिव ஹ்ரதம்.

(3) Maadhurya-ramyam, — charming and lovely because of its sweetness. Water itself is known as rasa because rasa is the essential nature of water, even as Gandha (smell) is of the earth. The Tirumeni of the Lord who is a ஸர்வ கந்தஸ்ஸர்வரஸ :- is naturally noted for its charming sweetness.

(4) Anagham—flawless. அகர்தமமிமம் தீர்த்தம் பரத்வாஜ நிஸாமய. Ramayana tells us that the first and foremost virtue of a reservoir of water is absence of dirt, and ப்ரஸந்ந ஸலிலம் or pellucid water. The Lord's Tirumeni is renowned not only for its being totally free from all doshas (faults) ஹேயப்ரத்யநீக, but also for its capacity to banish the sins of those who set their eyes on it.

ஆபீடரந்மௌளிபர்யந்தம் பர்யத: புருஷோத்தமம் |  
பாதகாந்யாஸுநபர்யந்தி இம்புநஸ்தூபபாதகம் ||

(5) Manibhangadrisyam—lovely to look at like a (broken) piece of emerald. The Lord is noted for His ஹிரிநில சிலா விபங்க நில colour. The exterior of an emerald is of course blue, but when split the blue colour can be seen to be quite intense and immense.



(6) **Sarasijaasrayam**—the resort for lotuses. Of course, a lotus tank is that. Even more is the Lord's **Tirumeni**. For as the Alwars are never tired of singing, கண்ணும் கமலம், கமலமே கைத்தலமும் மண்ணாளந்த பாதமும் மற்றவையே—கண்ணும் செந்தாமரை, கையுமவை, அடியோ அவையே—**Nammalwar**. கை வண்ணம் தாமரை வாய் கமலம் போலும் கண்ணினையும் அரளிந்தம் அடியும். :தே—**Tirumangai Alwar**. His **Tirumeni** is full of lotuses. In one place **Nammalwar** refers to கருமாணிக்க மலைமேல் மணித்தடந்தாமரைக் காடு. such a plethora of lotuses (*Desika* translates this sentiment into Sanskrit as புண்டரீக வநருசி in *Raghuv eeragadyam*).

**Sarasija** is a name of **Lakshmi**. The Tank with its lotuses is **Lakshmi's** place ஸ்தானம் யஸ்யா; ஸரஸிஜவநம் So also விஷ்ணு வக்ஷஸ்தலம் Hence the **Tirumeni** is ஸரஸிஜாஸ்ரயம் He is அகலகில்லேனிறையு மென்று அலர்மேல் மங்கையுறை மார்பன். Who but He can be a ஸரஸிஜாஸ்ரயம்? The place occupied by the epithet ஸரஸிஜாஸ்ரயம் between லக்ஷ்மீஸரஸ் on the one side and the Lord's அங்ககம் தே on the other, must be specially enjoyed.

**Sarasijaasrayam** is the crowning epithet.

(5)

#### Sloka-6.

ஆவிய்ய தாரயஸி விய்வமமுஷ்ய யந்தா  
 ஸேஷீ ஸ்ரியபதிரஸேஷதநூர்நிதாநம் |  
 இத்யாதிலக்ஷணகணை: புருஷோத்தமம் த்வாம்  
 ஜாநாதி யோ ஜகதி ஸர்வவிதேஷ கீத: ||

Entering into the world, Thou dost support it. Thou art the one who commands it, Thou art its master (*seshi*) and the Consort of **Lakshmi**. Thou hast everything and everyone (else) as Thy body, and art the primordial cause. If by the multitude of such distinctive marks of Thine, a person knows Thee to be **Purusothama**, such a person is praised (in song) in this world as one who knows everything.



Parabrahman of the Upanishads is equated and identified with Srinivasa (சீரிய:பதி) in the manner indicated by the Mangala Sloka of Sri Bhashya. ஸ்ருதிரவி விதிப்தே ப்ரஹ்மணி ஸ்ரீவிவாஸே. Immanence is the first mark (லக்ஷணம்) talked of by Desika in this sloka. Having entered into and permeated this Viswam—the Jagat of the 1st Mantra of Isavasyopanishad—He also supports it from outside. அந்த: பஹி: ச தத் ஸர்வம் வ்யாப்ய. Next His நியந்த்ருத்வம் or Rulership is referred to and after that His being the Seshi (one for whose benefit and pleasure everything else exists). Thus the ஆதார ஆதேய, நியந்த்ரு நியாம்ய, ஸேஷஸேஷி sambandha between the Prapancha on the one hand and the Lord on the other is postulated. That idea naturally leads to the next Brahmalakshanam mentioned in the sloka viz., akhilatman. The whole world is His body because He is the ஆதார. He is the நியந்தா and He is the ஸேஷி even as our individual soul is to our body. Finally He is the Jagatkaranam All these indications apart, the Lord's ஸீரிய: பதித்வம் it is that makes Him a Purushotthama. The truly learned ones thus realise Lord Deepaparakasa as Purushotthama by means of these several indicia of புருஷோத்தமத்வம். They alone know the only thing that is worth knowing. All other knowledge is worthless knowledge. So it is that the world reveres and respects and sings the praise of such ஞானிகள். (6)

### Sloka-7.

|| விஸ்வம் ஸுபாஸ்ரயவதீஸ வபுஸ்த்வதீயம்  
ஸர்வா கிரஸ்த்வயி பதந்தி ததோஸி ஸர்வ: |  
ஸர்வேசவேதவியஸ்த்வதநுக்ரஹார்த்தா:  
ஸர்வாதிகஸ்த்வமிதி தத்வவிதஸ்ததாஹு: ||

O! Lord! The entire world is Thy body even as Thy Divyamangala Vighraha is. All words have their culmination in Thee. Therefore, Thou art Sarvam (everything). All the Vedic commandments are only to secure Thy favour. For all these



reasons the true Gnanis say that Thou art above all (everyone and everything).

Several other attributes and characteristics of the Lord that show Him to be the Supreme Being without a second are set out in this sloka. In a sense, the traits referred to in the previous sloka can be said to be ஸ்வரூபநிருபகத்ர் மங்கள் or qualities by and because of which we realise He is the highest Truth. Jagatkaranam (cause of the Universe) has been chosen by the Sutrakara as a primary definition of Brahman (2nd Sutra ஜந்மாத்யஸ்ய யத:) The immanence and transcendence, and Lakshmipatitvam are all of that type, unique and definitive.

The qualities enjoyed in this sloka are நிருபித ஸ்வரூப விசேஷணங்கள் i. e., attributes of a postulated Supreme Being. They are (1) ஸர்வஸரீரித்வம் (2) ஸர்வ ஸப்த வாச்யத்வம் (3) ஸர்வபலப்ரதத்வம்.

Purushottamattvam was the feature stressed in the previous sloka; Sarvadhikatvam is the topic of this sloka. These two slokas (6 and 7) postulate the Swaroopam or essential nature of the Lord. It is a strange and striking feature of this Stotra that Roopam or Tirumeni (Body) of the Lord is dealt with in the first instance and Swaroopam follows. Slokas 4 and 5 both dealt with the Vighraha (Roopam) as can be seen from the concluding words thereof வபுஸ்தே and அங்ககம் தே respectively. This is a practical demonstration of the saying ஸ்வரூபாத் ஸ்வாமிநோ ரூபம் உபாதேயதமம் விது: The Roopam is greatly to be preferred to Swaroopam. This is the first sloka till now without an overt reference to Lakshmi.

The next sloka deals with gunas.

(7)



## Sloka 8.

ஞானம் பலம் நியமநக்ஷமதாத வீர்யம்  
 ஸக்திஸ்ச தேஜ இதி தே குணஷட்கமாத்யம் |  
 ஸர்வாதிஸாயிநி ஹிமோபவநேஸ யஸ்மிந்  
 அந்தர்கதோ ஜகதிவ த்வயி ஸத்குணௌக:||

Lord of the Cool Grove! Gnanam, Balam, Aiswaryam, Veeryam, Sakti and Tejas—these six are the foremost qualities. Within those six are implied and involved a multitude of other good qualities (like Souseelya, Vatsalya etc.,) even as the Jagat (Cosmos) is contained within Thee who dost excel all.



Swaroopā, Rōopā, Guṇā—this order as pointed out above has been deliberately departed from, and Rōopā is placed first and Swarōopā next. Guṇas or Qualities follow and they are dealt with in this sloka.

The first and foremost among Guṇas for which the Lord is famous are the Shadguṇas—six qualities known as Gnanam, Balam, Aiswaryam, Veeryam, Sakthi and Tejas. The Bhagavat Sastra (Sri Pancharatra) makes this quite clear though the Upanishads do not enumerate these qualities all at one place. These six are referred to by Desika in the Tattvatraya Chintanaadhikara of Srimad Rahasyathraya Sara thus: இவ்வாறு குணங்கள் பரத்வோபயுத்தங்களாயிருக்கும்.

There is another set of guṇas about which it is stated னௌசீல்ய வாத்தஸல்யாதிகள் னௌலப்யேர்பயுத்தங்களாயிருக்கும். They are numerous and hence this sloka refers to them as ஸத் குண ஓக; Several of them are found enumerated by Sri Bhaṣyakara in the Choornika of Saranagati Gadyam beginning with the words ஸ்வரபாவி கரவதிகாதிசய ஜ்ஞானபல. After the shadguṇas follow a



host of gunas beginning with ஸௌசீல்ய, வாத்ஸல்ய, மார்த்தவ etc., and winding up with கல்யாண குண கணௌக மஹார்ணவ.

One fine idea contained in the sloka is that the later set of qualities - innumerable as they are - are all contained, implied and involved in the Shadgunas. That is illustrated by the Cosmos being contained within the Lord during pralaya: ஒரு பொருள் புறப்பாடின்றி முழுவது மகப்பட as Nam-mazhwar put it. In the same way, the gunas like Sausceelya lurk in the Shadgunas and are favourable and helpful elaborations of the same for the delectation and protection of devotees. Note the reference to the second set of gunas as ஸத்குணः.

Students of Ramayana would be aware of how Sage Valmiki weaves an entirely new set of Shadgunas as adorning Sri Rama. ஆந்ருஸம்ஸ்யம், அநுக்ரோஸः, ஸ்ருதம், சீலம், தமः, ஸமः | ராகவம் ஸோபயந்த்யேதே ஷ்ட்குணः பருஷோத்தமம் || These six are the seeds for the Sadgunay-gham Desika sings about in this sloka, which Acharya-Ramanuja had enumerated in his Saranagati Gadya Choor-nika mentioned above. (8).

### Sloka 9.

தீபாவபாஸ! தயயா விதிபூர்வமேதத்  
 விஸ்வம் விதாய நிகமாநபி தத்தவந்தம் !  
 ஸிஷ்யாயிதா: ஸரணயந்தி முமுக்ஷுவஸ்த்வாம்  
 ஆத்யம் குரும் குருபரம்பரயாதிகம்யம் ||

Lord Deepaprakasa! As Thou hast out of Thy Mercy made (created) this Viswam (cosmos) with Brahma as the first (among the created beings,) and given (to Brahma) the Vedas, Thou, who are the first and foremost Acharya in the hierarchy of Acharyas (Guruparampara), art resorted to by Mumukshus (those desirous of securing Moksha) as Thy disciples, and they take refuge in Thee.



The essential nature of the Supreme Tattvam was enjoyed in the earlier slokas. He is the God to be attained. This sloka sets out the Lord's other aspect - that of redeeming souls from Samsara. What all He does towards that end are stated here. First He projects this world into being at the time of creation (at the end of pralaya). For that, He creates the four-faced Brahma who in turn creates the Prapancha of Chit and Achit. In order to help the Chetanas to redeem themselves. He gives them the Vedas, through Brahma. It is like giving a lamp to light our way through the darkness of Samsara ஸமயதி தம: ப்ரஜாநாம் ஸாஸ்த்ரமயேந ஸ்திரப்ரதீபேந Daya Sataka-18. In fact from creation, everything is an act attributable only to His Mercy or Daya. That is why this 'Sloka begins with the word Dayayaa after the first word which is an address to the Lord.

The Lord's Daya does not permit Him to stop with creation and giving the Shastras. He Himself becomes a Preceptor on right lines—பிதக வாடைப் பிரானூர் பிரம குருவாகி வந்து—Periyazhwar. ஆத்யம் குரும் of this sloka is repeated in the 1st sloka of Yatiraja Saptati—கமபி ஆத்யம் குரும் வந்தே.

Aspirants to Moksha regard themselves as the Lord's Sishyas - though not directly but through a hierarchy of Acharyas starting from the Lord and ending with one's own Acharya—in an unbroken succession. And ultimately they become His Saranagatas.

*[Readers are requested to enjoy this sloka in the light of the mantra of the Svetasvatara. Upanishad (6-18). It will also enable them to see how Saranagati Sastra is Upanishadic in origin.]*



## Sloka 10.

ஸத்தாஸ்திதிப்ரயதநப்ரமுகைருபாத்தம்  
 ஸ்வார்த்தம் ஸதைவ பவதா ஸ்வயமேவ விஸ்வம் |  
 தீபப்ரகாஸ ததிஹ த்வதவாப்தயே த்வாம்  
 அப்யாஜஸித்தமநபாயம் உபாயமாஹு: ||

Deepaparakasa! The entire world (Viswam) has been appropriated by Thee alone by virtue of its maintenance, protection, and activity etc., being solely for Thy benefit. It therefore is said here (in this world) that for attaining Thee, Thou art Thyself a safe and sure Upaya or means without any other aid and for no other reason.

— — —

By referring to ஸரணயந்தி in the previous sloka, Prapatthi which is the Saadhyopaya was indicated. But that is only one side of the picture - the other being the Lord Himself who is a Siddhopaya. The entire creation is His. He is responsible for its existence, protection and actions. He alone derives the entire benefit thereby as Seshee. That being so, knowing people regard Him as the true and unfailing saviour - the Saranagati that we perform being only a pretext or Vyajam, His innate protective Grace being alone the potent Upaya. (10)

## Sloka 11.

போக்யம் முகுந்த! குணபேதமசேதநேஷு  
 போக்த்ருத்வமாத்த்மநி நிவேர்ய நிஜேச்சயைவ |  
 பாஞ்சாலிகாஸுகவிபூஷணபோகதாயீ  
 ஸம்ராடிவாத்த்மஸமயா ஸஹ மோதஸே த்வம் ||

Mukunda! By Thy Sankalpa (Will-desire) alone Thou dost invest non-sentient (inanimate) objects with various traits capable of being enjoyed, and sentient beings with the capacity to enjoy. And, along with Lakshmi, who is equal



to Thee in all respects Thou dost derive pleasure like a Sovereign Ruler who adorns a doll with jewels and furnishes enjoyment to parrots (reared by him).

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The Upanishads have made a threefold division which must first be understood by every upasaka. Bhokta, Bhogyam and Prerita. Bhokta is the individual soul, Chetana. Bhogyam is achetana inanimate, non-sentient. The first is the enjoyer (Bhokta) and the second the enjoyed (Bhogyam). But the capacity to enjoy on the part of the soul, and the quality of being enjoyed seen in matter, are both the result of the Lord's Ichcha (Desire or Will). He invests matter with enjoyable qualities. He invests souls with the capacity to enjoy. Hence He is referred to as Prerita - the Director. From Brahma down to the worm, each soul is allowed to enjoy (or suffer) as per His direction. He is not a whimsical ruler but confers pleasure or pain on souls according to their Karma. That pleasure is derived, or that pain is suffered, only through the achetana objects. For the matter of that bodies which encase the souls are the chief means for enjoyment of pleasure or pain. Outside objects are another category of matter which are instrumental in furnishing pleasure or pain.

The two instances referred to in the sloka are (1) adorning a doll with jewels and (2) feeding parrots etc. In the former the pleasure is entirely the Lord's and Lakshmi's. For the doll is achetana - incapable of bhoga (enjoyment). In the latter, the parrot also enjoys good food, milk etc., sweet things. In both the cases the real persons who obtain enjoyment are the Lord and His Consort Lakshmi. They together indulge in the sport or Leela of the world. இன்புறு  
மிவ் விகையாட்டு.

Unless we have a correct idea of the Tattvatrayam God, Man and Matter, we cannot progress spiritually. This knowledge is quite essential as otherwise we are apt to think that



we are the real enjoyers - nay - we may not know that the soul is different from matter. The necessity for a clear conception of this three fold Tattva has been stressed by our Acharyas in several places. Desika has put it very shortly and pithily in a Kural Venba.

முத்திக் கருள் சூட மூன்றைத் தெளி முன்னம்  
இத்திக்கால் ஏற்கு மிதம்.

Hence the sloka emphasises that the Lord and Lakshmi alone are responsible for the creation of objects for enjoyment by souls, and for the souls enjoying those objects.

There appears to be a reading பாஞ்சாலிகாட்சக விபீஷண போகதாயீ in place of பாஞ்சாலிகா சுக விபூஷண போகதாயீ. Reference to Draupati getting cloth and Vibheeshana obtaining the kingdom is not quite apt and will not fit in with the Samrat idea, which is the central idea of the sloka. (11)

### Sloka 12.

த்வாம் மாதரம் ச பிதரம் ஸஹஜம் நிவாஸம்  
ஸந்த: ஸமேத்ய ஸரணம் ஸுஹ்ருதம் கதிம் ச |  
நிஸ்ஸீ மநித்யநிரவத்யஸுகப்ரகாஸம்  
தீபப்ரகாஸ ஸவிபூதி குணம் விஸந்தி ||

Lord Deepaparakasa! The Satpurushas (with true knowledge) resort to Thee as mother, father, brother, abode (resting place), refuge (means), friend, and goal. They enter into (enjoy) Thee who art limitless, eternal and faultless bliss and knowledge and also endowed with wealth and qualities.

The several relationships (உறவு) with the Lord are set out in the first half of the sloka—Mother, father, brother, and good friend. He is also our Nivasam—place where we live in, house or abode. Knowing Him to be



all this and more and also as means and end, the great ones take refuge in Him.

When they do so, they enter into, and enjoy Him together with several glorious qualities of His, which are enumerated in the second half of the sloka. He is Bliss and Knowledge ஸுகப்ரகாசம் which are boundless, eternal and faultless. They enjoy Him not as mere existence, but as endowed with all the several auspicious qualities and absence of all evil qualities, and also as உபய விபூதி நாயகன் the overlord of this Leela Vibhuti and also of that other Nitya (Eternal) Vibhuti beyond created cosmos. They contemplate on Him as such விபூதிமான் and as உயர்வற உயர் நலமுடையவன். The gunas include not only atmagunas like gnana, shakti etc., but also deha gunas inclusive of a most captivating Divya Mangala Vighraha. த்வாம் is the first word விசந்தி is the last word—*த்வாம் விசந்தி* They enter into Thee—the ஸந்த: Incidentally we get to know who are the ஸந்த: referred to in the Upanishads. (12)

### Sloka 13.

ஜந்தோரமுஷ்ய ஜநநே விதிஸம்புத்ருஷ்டௌ  
ராகாதிநேவ ரஜஸா தமஸா ச யோக: |  
த்வைபாயநப்ரப்ருதயஸ்த்வதவேக்ஷிதாநாம்  
ஸத்வம் விமுகத்திநியதம் பவதீத்யுஸந்தி |

Sage Vyasa and others have said that if, at the time of the birth of this soul, it is seen by Brahma or Siva, it gets associated with Rajoguna and Tamoguna as also with Raga and Dvesha (desire and hatred); but if it is seen by Thee, Satvaguna, which is invariably associated with Moksha, comes about.

Jaayamaana Kataaksham i. e., the looks a person receives at the time of his or her birth is the topic of this sloka. It has been said by Sage Vyasa, in the Mahabharata, that



persons who are the recipients of the glances of Brahma or Rudra at the time of birth become Rajasic or Tamasic by nature whereas one on whom Lord Madhusoodana's glances fall at birth, shines as a Sattvic person, whose chief thoughts are directed towards the attainment of Moksha. The following oft-quoted sloka may be set out here.

ஜாயமாநம் ஹி புருஷம் யம் பஸ்யேத் மதுஸூதந: |  
ஸாத்விக: ஸ து விஜ்ஞேய: ஸ வை மோக்ஷார்த்த சிந்தக: ||

(Mahabharatam: Santi Parvam C. 58 sl. 73 to 77) The idea is very well put in sloka 22 of Daya Sataka நயநே வருஷா சலேந்தோ: தாராமைதீர்ம் ததாநயா கருணே!! த்ருஷ்டஸ் த்வையவ ஜநிமாந் அபவர்க்கம் அக்ருஷ்டபச்யம் அநுபவதி|| Recipients at birth of the Daya-laden glances of Lord Srinivasa secure moksha without any effort. (13)

#### Sloka 14.

கர்மஸ்வநாதிவிஷமேஷு ஸமோ தயாநு:  
ஸவேநைவ க்லுப்தமபதேஸமவேக்ஷமாண: |  
ஸ்வப்ராப்தயே தநுப்ருதாம் த்வரஸே முருந்த!  
ஸ்வாபாஸிகம் தவ ஸுஹ்ருத்த்வமிதம் க்ருணந்தி ||

Mukunda! Thou art the same unto everyone and Thou art imbued with Daya. In the midst of originless and adverse (unfavourable) Karmas (deeds) of men, Thou dost pitch upon some pretext (some act or omission) as a favourable one and hasten the process of those persons attaining Thee. This trait of Thine is said (by the great ones) to be Thy innate (natural) friendliness (to all beings.)

The sloka enshrines a very fine sentiment. It purports to define the Lord's ஸுஹ்ருத்த்வம் His friendliness. ஸுஹ்ருத் is one of the names of the Lord in the Sahasranama (No. 461) It has been interpreted by Parasara



Bhattacharya as the Lord's impulse to do lasting good even to those who do not do any good act.

To do good to a bad man may be a laudable trait. But to an impartial person it will be next to impossible to do good to one bad man out of millions of bad men. He will be accused of caprice and partiality. The Lord who is a ஸர்வஸம: (common to one and all), He himself having declared ஸமோஹம் ஸர்வபூதேஷு cannot, if He is to preserve His impartiality untarnished, extend His protection to anyone He chooses unless that one has deserved that protection to some extent at least.

Envisaging this difficult situation of the Lord, Desika has sung about it in a sloka of Sankalpa Suryodaya where he has pictured the Lord as one who has two wives, each differing from the other in ideals and ideologies.

மித: கலஹ கல்பநா விஷமவ்ருத்தி லீலாதயா  
பரிக்ரஹ கௌதுக ப்ரதித பாரவஸ்ய: ப்ரபு: |  
ஸ்வலக்ஷித ஸமுத்தகமே ஸுக்ருதலக்ஷணே குத்ரசித்  
குணக்ஷதலிபிக்ரமாதுபரிபாதிந: பாதி ந: ||

Leela and Daya are the two spouses of the Lord. Between them there is eternal disagreement and even dissension. Leela insists on the Lord rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked. Daya pleads for the wicked and seeks the Lord's reprieve in their case. The Lord cannot afford to displease either of His spouses. So, He watches minutely and discovers what to Him appears to be a good act in a wicked man. By reference to it He satisfies Leela Devi and Daya Devi, and without offending either, extends His protection to the poor man. That man never intended to commit any righteous act. He chased a cow round a Temple in order to hurt it for having eaten his corn. The Lord makes a note that he made pradakshinam of His shrine and was therefore entitled to be protected. The example is a very



telling one— like the letter marked out in timber or in the leaf of a book by an insect known as ghuna. It means “by some fortuitous or chance circumstance”.

The words ஸம: and தயாரு: in the Deepika sloka are intended to remind us about the respective functions of Leela and Daya in the Sankalpa Suryodaya sloka. ஸ்வேநைவ க்விப்தமபதேஸமவேக்ஷமாண: corresponds to ஸ்வலக்ஷித ஸமுத்தக்மே ஸுக்ருதலக்ஷணே குத்ரசித்.

Catching hold of such a pretext discovered by Himself for our uplift, the Lord hastens to work out our spiritual welfare. That is His ஸுஹ்ருத்வம். (14)

### Sloka 15.

நித்ராயிதாந் நிகமவர்த்மநி சாருதர்சீ  
ப்ரஸ்தாநஸக்திஸஹிதாந் ப்ரதிபோத்ய ஜந்தாந் |  
ஜீர்ணஸ்தநந்தயஜடாந்த முகாநிவாஸ்மாந்  
நேதும் முகுந்த யதஸே தயயா ஸஹ த்வம் || 15

Mukunda! Thou with lovely looks along with (in the company of) Daya (Devi) does wake up people like us who are capable of walking along, but who have fallen asleep on the Vedic path; and dost make effort to lead us on the right path, as Thou wouldst in the case of beings who are worn out by old age, or are suckling babes, idiots or blind ones.

The suhrittvam of the preceding sloka does not permit the Lord to keep quiet. It impels Him to rouse us from the stupor we have fallen into, and help us to traverse the path to reach Him. Our lack of knowledge and / or Sakti, however, equates us to the state of a decrepit old man, or a suckling baby, or an idiot, or a blind man. Even as a kind and considerate person will help each one of the above four



categories of helpless persons, the Lord comes to our rescue, redeems us from age-long sleep and stupor in regard to matters of spirit, and leads us to Himself.

That is why He is addressed as "Mukunda" in this sloka, as well as in slokas 11 and 14 ante. Mukunda means one who confers Moksha and also worldly welfare. In sloka 11, conferment of worldly pleasures was referred to. In 14 and 15 conferment of Moksha is the topic.

To those who possess the necessary strength and capacity to walk along the long and arduous path of Bhaktiyoga the Lord's help is confined to rouse them into activity. உத்திஷ்ட! ஜாக்ரத! ப்ராப்ய வரான் நிபோதத | Arise, Awake and stop not till the goal is reached. To people like us incapable of pursuing that path owing to want of gnana or sakti or both, He becomes Himself the means or Upaya. The next sloka, therefore, refers to both Bhakti and Prapatthi. (The reading ரஹிதான் for ஸஹிதான் in the 2nd quarter has not been adopted since it ignores Baktiyoganishtas) (15)

### Sloka 16.

பக்தி:ப்ரபத்திரதவா பகவம்ஸ்ததுக்தி:  
தந்நிஷ்டஸம்ஸ்ய இதீவ விகல்ப்யமாநம் |  
யம் கஞ்சிதேகமுபபாதயதா த்வயைவ  
த்ராதாஸ்தரந்த்யவஸரே பவிநோபவாப்திம் || 16

Bhagavan! Being induced by Thee to adopt any one of the four methods, Bhakti, or Prapatthi, or mere utterance thereof, or close association with one who has adopted it, men of this world get protected by Thee, and at the proper point of time, cross this ocean of samsara (birth and death).



It was த்வரஸே முகுந்த in sloka 14 and யதஸே முகுந்த in sloka 15. That hurry and anxiety on the part of the Lord to achieve our release, and the attempts made by Him in that direction bear fruit only when He makes us adopt one of the upayas laid down by Him to secure release for us. They are four in number as per this sloka. That they are of equal validity and effectiveness is shown by the word விகல்ப்யமாசம்.

(1) Bhaktiyoga: Constant contemplation with unflinching incessant devotion till the end of Prarabdha Karma.

(2) Prapatthi - or surrender -- attended by the five angas, Anukoolya Sankalpa; Prathikoolya Varjana, Mahaviswasa, Gopratva Varana and Karpanya anusandhana.

(3) உக்தி or Utterance of the Prapatthi Prayoga with samudaya gnana imperfect knowledge either by oneself or with the aid of an Acharya.

(4) Bhagavata nishta i.e., getting attached closely to one who has adopted any one of the three foregoing methods. This category is described as களவொழிவார் எமரென்ன இசைந்தவர் - in verse 5 of அடைக்கலப் பத்து.

The Lord does not stop with making us adopt one of these methods for our redemption. He acts as the redeemer and protector and at the proper time helps us to cross the ocean of Samsara.

அவஸரே—at the proper time: at the end of Prarabdha Karma to the Bhaktiyoganishta, at the end of this body to the த்ருப்தப்ரபந் and so on. (16)

### Sloka 17.

நாநாவிதைரகபடைரஜஹத்ஸ்வபாவை;  
அப்ராக்ருதைர்நிஜவிஹாரவஸேந ஸித்தை; |  
ஆத்மீயரக்ஷணவிபக்ஷவிநாஸநார்த்ததை;  
ஸம்ஸ்தாபயஸ்யநக ஜந்மபிராத்ய தர்மம் || 17



By Thy faultless births which are of various and varied forms, which are true (having no tricks about them), which never give up or forsake Thy essential nature, which are untouched by prakriti (Satva, Rajas and Tamas), which have been assumed purely due to Thy sportive instinct and which are calculated to protect Thy own people and destroy (their) foes, Thou dost establish the ancient Dharmam.



After having referred to the various steps taken by the Lord out of His own mercy to redeem people from Samsara, Desika refers in this sloka to the exceptional excellence of the Lord's Avataras (Incarnations).

(1) They are all blemishless. (2) They are of multifarious forms. Vide எந்நின்ற யோநியுமாய்ப் பிறந்தாய் of Nammalwar (3) They are all true and not mere illusions apparitions or hallucinations. (4) They never forsake the innate nature of the Lord, (5) They are all made of Suddhasatwa, a material which is aprakrita, not partaking of triguna - Satva, rajas and tamas and (6) they are all the outcome of the Lord's sportive instinct or desire to indulge in vihara - not the result of compulsion of any sort. This is a succinct description of what is known as Avatara Rahasya touched upon by the Lord in the Bhagavad Gita (ஜநம் கர்ம ச மே திவ்யம் etc.).

Lastly, the twin purpose of Avatara ஸாது பரித்ராண and துஷ்க்ருத்விநாச are mentioned. ஆத்மீய ரக்ஷணம் and விபக்ஷவிநாசம். The Sadhus pertain to the Lord Himself, hence they are referred to as ஆத்மீய His own. Vipaksha can only mean enemies of His devotees, for He Himself has no enemies “ந மே த்வேஷ்யோஸ்தி”.

By repeatedly coming into the world in this wise He re-establishes the ஆத்யதர்மம் or pristine Dharmam from time



to time. தர்மஸம்ஸ்தாபநார்த்தாய ஸம்பவாமி are His  
own words. (17)

*Sloka 18.*

நிம்நோந்நதாநி நிகிலாநி பதாநி காடம்  
மஜ்ஜந்தி தே மஹிமஸாகரசீகரேஷு |  
நீ ந்த்ரமாஸ்ரயஸி நீசஜநாம்ஸ்ததாமி  
சீலேந ஹந்த ஸிஸிரோபவநேஸ்வர த்வம் || 18

Lord of the Cool Grovel (தண்கா). In the spray (small drops) of the ocean of Thy immense glory, all the posts of power and position high and low, get fully and wholly immersed. And yet, such a Thou by reason of Thy Seelaguna closely resortest to (seekest the company of) low persons. Wonderful!

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When Desika sang about the avatars of the Lord in the previous sloka he remembered how in several avatars the Lord freely mixed with the lowliest of the low. Contrasting their lowliness with the immense greatness of the Lord, the poet stands aghast for a while and cries hanta!

The greatest persons known to us are but pigmies when compared to the Lord. The high posts - which look high and lofty to us - of Brahma, Siva, Indra and others—are so small when compared to the mighty eminence of the Lord that they are here said to be drowned in a small drop of the ocean of the Lord's greatness. And yet as Rama and Krishna, how closely and how intimately did the Lord mix with such people as Guha the boatman (hunter), Sugreeva the monkey-king, Sabari a hunter woman, Kuchela the picture of dire poverty, Kubja the curved hunchback, the ignorant folk of Gokul, and a vendor of flowers. Where is His greatness and where is their lowliness? Nothing undaunted, not a bit abashed, the Lord sought them all out and



moved on most free and intimate terms with them. This trait of the Lord known as Seelam or Souseelyam has rendered the Lord dear to every devotee. And here is Desika losing himself in high appreciation of that great quality - which Valmiki has referred to as Gunam simpliciter. Seelam has been defined as மஹதோ மந்தை ஸ்ஸஹ நீரந்த்ரஸம்ஸ் லேஷ:. This sloka elaborates the several parts of that definition using several words found therein. (18)

### Sloka 19.

காசிவ்ருகாந்தகஸராஸந-பாண-கங்கா-  
ஸம்பூதி-நாம-க்ருதி-ஸம்வதநாத்யுதந்தை : |  
ஸ்வோக்த்யம்பரீஷபயஸாபமுகைச்சஸம்பும்  
த்வந்நிக்நமீக்ஷிதவதாமிஹ க: ஸரண்ய: || 19

To those who see how Paramasiva is dependent on, and subservient to, Thee, from episodes such as those relating to (1) the king of Kasi (Varanasi) (2) Vrikasura (3) Andhakasura (4) the bow (Dhanus) (5) Baanasura and (6) Ganga, and by reason of reference in the scriptures to his birth, his being given a name, and to the conversations (between him and others like Brahma) and also because of his own sayings, his fear of Ambarisha and his being the recipient of curses, and the like—to them who can be the refuge? (Will such persons here regard any one but Thee as Protector?)

The Lord's transcendent glory and greatness are stressed in this sloka. And that is done by pointing out how those who have read the scriptures will conclude that the Lord alone is the Superior and Supreme Being far above Paramasiva who alone if at all can compete with Him for Supremacy. There are numerous episodes in the Puranas in which time and again Rudra got vanquished by the Lord whenever he attempted to antagonise Him - which he unwisely did on



several occasions; some of them are referred to in the sloka. Two of them furnish instances of Siva opposing the Lord in battle. (1) To help Kasiraja -- king of Varanasi - who tried to support Paundraka Vasudevan against the true and the only one Vasudeva, Rudra joined in the fray and opposed Lord Sri Krishna. (2) Similarly Siva siding Baana-sura tried his best to rout Lord Sri Krishna. Amudanaar finely sings about this.

கார்த்திகையானும் கரிமுகத்தானும் கனலும் முக்கண்  
மூர்த்தியும், மோடியும் வெப்பும் முதுகிட்டு, மூவுலகும்  
பூத்தவனையென்று போற்றிட வாணன் பிழை பொறுத்த  
தீர்த்தன்.”

That is what Krishna did. (மோடி is Kali. வெப்பு is fever).

Vrikasura got a boon from Rudra and acquired the power of shattering a man's head to pieces by placing his hand on that head. He wanted to try that power on Rudra himself and chased him. The Lord by a trick made the asura place his hand on his own head and thereby get destroyed. Andhakasura was another who teased and tormented Siva who got saved by the Lord's intervention.

The reference to the Saraasana or bow may be to the Siva-Dhanur bhangam in Ramavatara. The river Ganga had its origin in the Lord's feet during Trivikrama Avatara and Siva became Siva (auspicious) by receiving the River on his head.

The scriptures also refer to the birth of Siva - to his being given a name and so on—all indicative of his being a finite being. Numerous passages are attributed to Siva wherein he acknowledges Lord Narayana's Supremacy.



The curse about the Kapalam (skull) of Brahma, one of whose (then five) heads Siva had chopped off, was banished by Narayana. Nammazhwar refers to this as firmly establishing Lord Narayana's Supremacy. பேசநின்ற சிவன்தனக்கும் பிரமன்தனக்கும் பிறர்க்கும் நாயகனவனே, கபால நன்மோக்கத்துக் கண்டுகொண்மின்.

Ambarisha episode is separately referred to because that is an instance where Sage Durvasa and Paramasiva who sought to support that sage were obliged to obtain reprieve and safety, not from the Lord, but from a sincere devotee of the Lord - Ambarisha.

From these several episodes it is seen that Paramasiva himself is dependent on, and subservient to, Srīman Narayana. Thereafter can any one doubt that He alone is our sole refuge? Out of hosts of Devas, Siva is marked out as a top-ranking Deva, and if he himself owes allegiance to the Lord, need any one say more to underline Narayana's Supremacy? (19)

### Sloka 20.

க்வாஸௌ விபு: க்வ வயமித்யுபஸத்திபீதாந்  
 ஜந்தூந் ஷுனாத் த்வதநுவ்ருத்திஷு  
 யோக்யயந்தி |  
 ஸம்ப்ராப்தஸத்குருதநோ: ஸமயே தயாளோ:  
 ஆத்மாவதிர்பவதி ஸிஷிததி: ஷுணம் தே || 20

“Where is this Supreme Ruler of all, and where are we (infinitesimal beings.)?” - to persons seized with this fear which prevents them from approaching Thee, Thou, imbued with mercy, and taking the form of a Sadguru (noble preceptor) at the proper time, makest them fit to approach Thee in a trice, by conferring on them perfect intellect taught by Thee which will be there as long as the Atma is there.



The sloka begins with echoing Nammazhwar's exclamation அம்மான் ஆழிப்பிரான் அவன் எவ்விடத்தான், யானார்? "Where and who is He; and where and who am I?". There is that amount of immeasurable and unbridgeable disparity between Him and us. When we think of this aspect, naturally we become prone to run away from Him. Even Alwar is said to have attempted to do so in his வளவேழ் திருவாய்மொழி (1-5). This fear thus engendered in us by the Lord's transcendental glory and our utter smallness is here referred to as உபஸத்திபீதி — the fear to approach. Merciful Lord that He is, He dons the form of an Acharya at the proper time in the evolution of each soul, and out of His infinite mercy imparts true instruction (தத்வஜ்ஞான) which immediately renders us fit (யோக்யயந்தி) for communion with Him. This true knowledge and perception given to us by Him as Acharya remain there for ever and ever.

Perialwar refers to this benefit conferred on us by the Lord :

“ஏதங்களாயின வெல்லா மிறங்க விடுவித்து  
என்னுள்ளே  
பீதகவாடைப் பிரானார் பிரமகுருவாகி வந்து,  
போதில் கமலவன்னெஞ்சம் புகுந்தும் என்சென்னித்  
திடரில்  
பாதவிலச்சினை வைத்தார்”.

In sloka 50 of Daya Satakam this act of the Lord coming to us as an Acharya is attributed to Daya. Note the word தயாளோ ! in this sloka.

ஸிக்ஷித தீ : seems to be a better reading than ஸம்ஸக்ருத தீ: (20)

*Sloka 21.*

யோக்யம் யமைய்ச நியமைய்ச விதாய சித்தம்  
ஸந்தோ ஜிதாஸநதயா ஸ்வவஸாஸுவர்கா : |  
ப்ரத்யாஹ்ருதேந்த்ரியகணு: ஸ்திரதாரணஸ்த்வாம்  
த்யாத்வா ஸமாதியுகளேந விஸோகயந்தி || 21



The great and true ones first make their minds fit by Yama and Niyama, then by controlled asanas (postures) and subdued breath (praanaayama) conquer their sense-organs, and with concentrated contemplation meditate upon Thee (by Dhyana), and ultimately visualise Thee by the two kinds of Samadhi (profound meditation).

— — —

After having dealt with Tattva (truth) in its various aspects, Desika, from this sloka onwards, begins to deal with Upaya or means for realising the Lord. Bhakti and Prapatthi are the two broad divisions in regard to Upaya. Performance of Bhakti yoga by means of Ashtanga yoga is first dealt with. And that is the topic of this sloka. The eight angas (component parts) are 1. Yama; 2. Niyama; 3. Asana; 4. Praanaayaama; 5. Pratyahaara; 6. Dhaaraana; 7. Dhyana; 8. Samadhi. In Yoga, Samaadhi is referred to as the anga and the other seven as its angas. This sloka refers to all the eight in that same order. Yama meaning self-control and Niyama meaning self-restraint are practised first with a view to make the mind (out to employ itself in contemplation) fit for the task. Then comes the body-control and the adoption of a suitable asana or posture. Seated properly in an asana suited to meditation, the upasaka next begins to control the breath and regulate it. This is the Praanaayaama stage. It is followed by the pratyahaara which introverts vision from external objects into one's own interior (self)—by no means an easy task. A Veda mantra blames the Creator for having made all the senses look out. It requires great courage and steadfast determination to turn them all inwards to visualise the Inner Self (ஆவ்ருத்த சக்தி ; அம்ருதத்வ மிச்சந்).

Now, one has equipped himself for the next step—Dhaaraana, steady abstraction of mind. This enables Dhyana, an unbroken series of mental realisation (like the flow of



oll. And Dhyana leads to, and finds its fruition in, Samadhi--the state of at-one-ment with the object of contemplation. This rapprochement or coming together of the person who meditates and the object of meditation is the goal. It is of two kinds—yugalam, ஸாலம்ப and நிராலம்ப having a hold on a form, or not having any such hold i. e., meditating on the formless swaroopa of the Lord.

Full perception so obtained is indicated by the word,  
வினோகயந்தி. (21)

### Sloka-22.

பத்மாபிராமவதநேக்ஷணபாணிபாதம்  
திவ்யாயுதாபரணமால்யவிலேபநம் த்வாம் |  
யோகேந நாத ஸுபமாஸ்ரயமாத்மவந்த:  
ஸாலம்பநேந பரிசிந்த்ய ந யாந்தி த்ருப்திம் || 22

Lord! The self-controlled persons deeply contemplate (meditate) on Thee possessing an auspicious Form with lotus like face, eyes, hands and feet, celestial weapons, jewels, garlands and unguents (like sandal and saffron) by means of Saalambana Yoga and never attain satisfaction or contentment.

Saalambana Yoga is dealt with in this sloka. The next one deals with Niralambana yoga. The Meditation on The Lord's Form is so pleasant and pleasing that the Upasaka never feels he has had enough of it. The object of meditation is referred to here as ஸுபம் ஆஸ்ரயம் i. e., ஸுபாஸ்ரய or Divyamangala Vighraha of the Lord, who is addressed as நாத! (Lord). The Lord has face, eyes, hands and feet all of them delectable like the lotus (Padmam). The passage is an echo of the Alwars' enjoyment. கண்ணும் கமலம் கமலமே கைத்தலமும் மண்ணாளந்தபாதமும் மற்றவையே (Peyalwar) கைவண்ணம் தாமரை வாய் கமலம் போலும் கண்ணிணையும் அரவிந்தம் அடியும் அ.:தே (Tirumangai Alwar) செந்தாமரைத்



தடங்கண் செங்கனிவாய் செங்கமலம் செந்தாமரையடிகள்  
(Nammalwar).

Padmaabhirama may also be taken to mean 'Pleasing and delightful to Lakshmi'. The face and form of the Lord are a source of perennial joy to Lakshmi. (Vide sloka 100 of Varadarja Stavam) ஸதாதநத்வேபி ததாதநத்வத் நலீபவத் ப்ரேமரஸப்ரவாஹயா நிஷேவிதம் த்வாம் ஸதேநாத்கயா ஸ்ரியா That is the extent to which the Lord's Tirumeni is abhirama-delightful to Padma (Lakshmi).

If His face, eyes etc., are pleasing and delightful, His ornaments jewels, garlands and anointments (பூச்சுக்கள்) are all Divya, - celestial. They enhance His beauty and attractiveness, and lend grandeur and glory to His personality, and thereby the contemplating mind of the Yogi gets enraptured beyond measure.

On such a sweet and transcendental form Yogis fix their minds and meditate unceasingly in the manner described in the previous sloka. In course of time, at the fruition of the Yoga by its culmination in samadhi, they see and visualise (விலோகயந்தி) but as it is only மாநஸஸாக்ஷாத் காரம் and not சாக்ஷுஷ்ப்ரத்யக்ஷம் it is referred to here as பரிசிந்த்ய. The more they so see Him the more they hanker to see Him again and again, for they do not feel that they have realised Him mentally sufficiently well or sufficiently long. They do not feel contented.

அத்ருப்தி or discontentment and unsatiation in respect of the possession of the world's goods is the normal state of every human being. The more he has, the more he wants. This seems to be true of great sages and saints also, though it is in regard to God-enjoyment. Sage Valmiki is praised for his discontentment அத்ருப்தஸ்தம்முநிம் வந்தே ப்ராசேதஸமகல்மஷம். Drinking deep at the ocean of the Nectar of Ramacharita, he yet feels unsatiated. Why, even Dasaratha who has no claims to spiritual greatness felt



like that while he saw Sri Rama coming towards him. ந ததர்ப்ப ஸமாயாந்தம் பஸ்யமானோ நராதிரப :  
Even as he was seeing Rama ascending the steps of the palace, Dassratha felt as if he would like to see Him coming towards him like this for ever.

Swamy Desika gives expression to a similar feeling while enjoying the beauty of Sri Devanatha of Tiruvahindrapuram. ப்ரத்யங்கபூர்ண ஸுஷமா ஸுபகம் வபுஸ்தே த்ருஷ்ட்வா த்ருஸௌ விபுதநாத! நத்ருப்யதோ மே (14)  
My eyes that gaze on Thy Tirumeni, whose every anga is full of lustre and beauty, never feel satisfied.

The trait of the Lord which never satiates those who enjoy Him has been beautifully described by Nammalwar by a single word ஆராவமுது. Unsatiating nectar—a name and as idea that had eluded even the great Bhishma who gave us the Sahasranama. (22)

### Sloka 23.

மாநாதிலங்கிஸுகபோதமஹாம்புராஸௌ  
மக்நாஸ்திரிஸீமரஹிதே பவத: ஸ்வரூபே |  
தாபத்ரயேண விஹதிம் ந பஜந்தி பூய:  
ஸம்ஸாரகர்மஜநிதேந ஸமாதிமந்த: ||

23

Those who have perfected the art of meditation and attained the pinnacle of it known as Samadhi and get immersed in Thy Swaroopā (abstract nature) which is like a big ocean of immeasurable pleasure and knowledge untrammelled by the threefold limitations (of space time and object), will never again become afflicted by the threefold taapa (heat) caused by the heat of Samsara.

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Niralamba yoga in which the upasaka meditates on, and realises, the Swaroopā (as contrasted with Rōopā or Form) is dealt with in this sloka. The all-pervading swarōopā which



is beyond human ken but begets unalloyed bliss and unobstructed knowledge (gnana) by being contemplated upon, and which is untrammelled by limitations of time, place or object, is the object of dhyana in this sloka, as opposed to the Divya mangala Vighraha referred to in the previous sloka. The contemplation of the swarupa also produces gnana and Ananda; it also ensures freedom from samsara. But it lacks the positive aspect which was described in the previous sloka. Swarupa Dhyana of course assures Mukti or release; but for positive ananda one has to look to the Tirumeni. Hence it has been rightly said ஸ்வரூபாத் ஸ்வாமிநேர் ரூபம் உபாதேயதமம் விது: Reference may be made to slokas 16 and 17 of Varadaraja Panchasat, which deal with Swarupa and Roopa respectively. (23)

#### Sloka 24.

தீஸம்ஸக்ருதாந் விதததாமிஹ கர்மபேதாந்  
ஸூத்தம் ஜிதே மநஸி சிந்தயதாம் ஸ்வமேகம் |  
த்வத்கர்மஸக்தமநஸாமபி சாபரேஷாம்  
ஸுதே பலாந்யபிமதாநி பவாந் ப்ரஸந்ந: || 24

To those who, with minds cleansed by knowledge, perform the several karmas (rites etc., laid down in the Karma-kanda of the Vedas) and to those who meditate on their own atma with minds disciplined by yoga, and to those others who do all karmas in a spirit of dedication to Thee as a manner of worshipping Thee—to all of them Thou, pleased by their (respective) acts, conferest the desired fruits.

The Lord's phalapradatva is dealt with in this sloka. Incidentally the Poorva mimamsa theory that a karma or action is itself the conferrer of fruit is refuted. Three classes of aspirants are referred to. Those who perform the rites and rituals ordained in the Vedas (Vedic karmas—like yagam, yagnam, Daanam etc.,) Secondly reference is made



to those who contemplate on their own individual soul or Atma, without the knowlege or feeling that it is Sesha to the Lord. This is known as Kaivalyam and it is said to be capable of giving a high degree of bliss (Kaivalyaanandam கைவல்யானந்தம்). Nammalwar of course belittles it by referring to it as தெரிவரிய அளவில்லாச் சிற்றின்பம். But to the extent it goes, it is reported to be high-class bliss. But even this is conferred on that person by the Lord. The third category of persons to whom the Lord's conferring of phala or fruit is referred to is the Karmayogi who does acts not for any fruits they can bring in, but as a mode and method of worship of the Lord Every act or Karma is Kainkaryā, Work is worship to them. Following Lord Sri Krishna's advice யத் கரோஷி தத் குருஷ்வ மதர்ப்பணம் they do acts which are even while the doing is there Bhagavad-arpanam.

The Lord becomes prasanna (pleased) by the acts of all the three sets of persons and confers on them the desired fruits. (24)

### Sloka 25.

உத்பாஹுபாவமபஹாய யதைவ கர்வ:  
 ப்ராம்ஸும் பலார்த்தமபியாசதி யோகிசிந்த்ய |  
 ஏவம் ஸுதுஷ்கரமுபாயகணம் விஹாய  
 ஸ்தாநே நிவேஸயதி தஸ்ய விசக்ஷணஸ்  
 த்வாம் || 25

Lord meditated upon by Yogist! Like a man of dwarfish stature desirous of getting at a fruit (beyond his reach) who, giving up the attempt to gather it with his uplifted hands, fervently begs of a tall person to secure it for him, in the same way, a clever person gives up the groups of Upayas (means) which are too arduous to be adopted by him, and in their place relies on thee.

After having dealt with Ashtanga Bhaktiyoga (21) in its saalamba (22) and niraalamba (23) aspects and with



Karmayoga and Gnanayoga (24). Desika begins to deal with Prapattiyoga in detail, as that is the very purpose and the central theme of this Stotra known as Saranagati Deepika. A reference to the other Upayas was made only to impress on us their arduous nature which is entirely beyond us.

Unless one strives, how can one derive any benefit? This is certainly true as far as it goes. But do we not see a short man obtaining the help of a tall man to get him the fruits of a tall tree? So too, for the fruit we desire, if there is one who is capable of securing it for us and if that person is well disposed towards us, can we not by approaching him in the proper way and enlisting his help obtain what we want?

That person here is the Lord Himself. He is the one whom yogis visualise in and by Samadhi yoga. So it will be wise on our part to give up ideas of adopting other upayas which we must know are beyond us, and to place the Lord in the place of those several upayas - impossible upayas for us.

The Lord becomes Himself the upaya in this Prapatti-Yoga, whereas He was only the fruit sought to be obtained by the pursuit of those other upayas. This idea lies at the very root of the Doctrine of Prapatti and hence is mentioned at the very outset. விசக்ஷணஸ்த்வாம் is the correct reading not விசக்ஷணம்த்வாம்.

Kalidasa's words are recollected to us here  
ப்ராம்சு லப்யே பலே லோபாத் உத்பாஹுரிவ வாமந: (25)

### Sloka 26.

நித்யாலஸார்ஹமபயம் நிரபேக்ஷமந்யை:  
விஸ்வாதிகாரமகிலாபிமதப்ரஸுதிம் |  
ஸிக்ஷாவிரோஷஸுபகம் வ்யவஸாயஸித்தா:  
ஸத்குர்வதே த்வா? முகுந்த ஷடங்கயோகம் || 26



Mukunda! Saranagati, which is a shadanga yogam (yogam with six component parts), is fit to be adopted by even the eternally slothful and indolent people, is free from fear of any sort, is entirely self-sufficient (there being no need to solicit help from any other quarter), is fit to be adopted by one and all, and is capable of conferring all desired ends. In addition, it is easily procurable by Acharya-upadesa. Therefore those who believe in the observance of this Shadangayogam with reference to Thee, hold it in high esteem.

Saranagati is known as Shadanga Yogam and is here referred to by that name. Five angas and one anga, or six in all, hence ஷட்விதா ஸரணாகதி: Bhakthiyoga is Ashtanga yoga; Prapatthi yoga is Shadangayoga.

Six excellences that are there to see in this six-anga yoga, are mentioned.

1. கியாலஸார்ஹம் Even an ever indolent person can adopt it, because it is to be performed but once and is over in a trice. ஸக்ருத் கர்த்தவ்யம் and க்ஷணகர்த்தவ்யம். In Bhaktiyoga you will have to ceaselessly toil for ages and ages before you get the fruit.

2. Freedom from fear. As the entire burden is thrown on the Lord, where is any scope for fear from any quarter? பயம் குதஸ்யாத் த்வயி ஸா நுகம்பே?

3. No need for any external help.

4. Capable of being adopted and followed by the entire world irrespective of sex, caste, creed or colour.

(5) Having the power to secure any desired fruit, not moksha alone.



(6) Easily learnt through upadesa. ஸிக்ஷா விசேஷ ஸுலபம் is preferable to the reading ஸிக்ஷாவிசேஷஸுபகம்

Each of these has to be contrasted with the corresponding requirement of Bhaktiyoga to realise the full meaning and force of the points made here.

For all these reasons, this Prapathi-yoga is held in high esteem by the knowing ones. (26)

### Sloka-27

த்வத்ப்ராதிசூல்யவிமுகா:ஸ்புரதாநுகூல்யா:  
க்ருத்வா புந: க்ருபணதாம் விகதாதிஸங்கா: |  
ஸ்வாமிந் பவ ஸ்வயமுபாய இதீரயந்த:  
த்வய்யர்ப்பயந்தி நிஜபரமபாரசக்தௌ || 27

(The wise ones) set their face against transgressions of Thy commands indicative of adverse and hostile attitude towards Thee, manifest a desire to fall in line with Thy wishes, repeatedly recount aloud their numerous foibles and faults, banish all doubt regarding the efficacy of this method in securing the desired fruit, keep on repeating "Swamin! (Lord) Pray, of Thine own accord, be my Saviour." and offer (submit) the burden of their protection to Thee who art omnipotent.

The Shadangas or six component parts are set out in this sloka. (1) A firm resolve not to be hostile to the Lord. This is known as ப்ராதிசூல்யவர்ஜனம். Eschewing opposition to Him. (2) A determination to positively conform to His will. This is ஆநுகூல்யஸங்கல்பம். (3) Loud and unabashed confession of our lowly state before Him. At least now let us know our true level or rather depth of depravity, and say it out without trying to hide or whitewash as we are prone to. Alavandar's sloka அமர்யாத: க்ஷுத்ர: has set the standard in Karpanya-anusandanam. The புந: meaning again,



is intended to remind us that it is this helpless state that qualifies us (அதிகாரம்) for Prapatthi. That same helplessness figures now as an anga.

(4) This is a feature or factor of great importance -Mahaviswasam. It is the most difficult-to-attain Anga. We must have full and complete confidence that we are sure to attain our heart's desire by adopting this Prapatthi. Curiously, this faith in its efficacy is obtained by the unlearned more easily than by the learned. "A single momentary mental act capable of wiping out my age long sins!-I can't believe it." This is a normal reaction of people. Swamy Desika has referred to it in these very words in Nyasa Tilakam. "கர்த்தவ்யம் ஸக்ருதேவ ஹந்த கலுஷம் ஸர்வம் ததோ நஸ்யதி" He calls it விஸ்வாஸ ப்ரதிபந்திசிந்தநம். Emphasis is therefore laid on this angam more than any other (5) The next one is known as கோபத்ருத்வ வரணம். Resorting to the Lord and praying to Him to be our Gopta (protector) "My Lord! Pray, Thyself be my protector" (6) With those words on their lips they lay the burden of their protection at the Lord's feet. This is the 6th anga. It is also referred to as the angi or chief to which the rest appertain as component parts.

This transfer of burden is Saranagati when it is attended by Karpanya anusandana, aanukulya sankalpa, praatikulya varjana, mahaviswasa and goptrutvavaranam. In the Abhaya-pradanasara Desika very beautifully illustrates all these while expatiating on Vibheeshana Saranagati.

(27)

### Sloka 28.

அர்த்தாந்தரேஷு விமுகாந் அதிகாரஹாதே:  
ஸ்வரத்தாதிகாம்ஸ்த்வநுபூதிநிலம்பபீதாந் |  
தீபப்ரகாஸ லபஸே ஸுசிராத் க்ருதீவ

நிபந்தாந்நஸ்தவ பதே நிப்ருதாந் ப்ரபந்நாந் || 28



Lord Deepaparakasa! Thou dost obtain after a very long time prapannas who have turned their faces away from all wealth, and from all other means because of their unfitness for those means, who possess inordinate faith and fervour (in prapatti) who are afraid of delay in obtaining union with Thee, who are firm and steadfast in their faith, and who have deposited their souls (i. e., the burden of protection) at Thy Feet.



The Lord said in the Gita that people come to Him and seek refuge in Him at the end of several births. பஹு நாம் ஜந்மநாமந்தே ஜ்ஞாநவாந் மாம் ப்ரபத்யதே. But here we see Desika telling the Lord that after a long time, He secures a Prapanna. The Lord yearns for Prapannas and that is why He followed up the Gita sentiment above referred to by saying வாஸுதேவ: ஸர்வமிதி ஸமஹாத்மா ஸுதூர்லப; To a Prapanna, Vasudeva is everything, the food he eats, the water he drinks, and the betel he chews (தாரக, போஷக and போக்ய) No wonder when He obtains a Prapanna He feels like one who has done his work and gained his end, (க்ருதக்ருத்ய: and க்ருதார்த்த:)

Five merits in the Prapannas are set out in the sloka,—

1. Complete indifference to every sort of worldly pleasure or material welfare. They regard it as trash. த்ருணயமேநே. அச்சவை பெறினும் வேண்டேன். 2. Their Mahaviswasa gets confirmed and underlined by their unfitness for other upayas. As Desika himself has put it elsewhere "all other upayas have forsaken me. ஸந்த்யக் தோந்யைருபாயை: 3. They are quite intolerant of any delay in obtaining mystic union with their Lord த்ருஃர் யுகாயதே த்வாமபஸ்யதாம்-ஒருபகல் ஆயிரம் ஊழியாலோ. This marks out the Prapanna from the Bhaktiyoga nishta who is willing to wait. 4. Steadfast and unflinching faith in the Lord's protective grace. No wavering. 5. Offered themselves at the Lord's Feet.



The Lord is in search of such genuine souls and when He gets one after a long time, He feels pleased and happy. (28)

*Sloka-29.*

மந்த்ரைநுஸ்ரவமுகேஷ்வதிகம்யமாநை,  
ஸ்வாதிக்ரியாஸமுசிதைர்யதிவாஸ்யவாக்யை: |  
நாத த்வதீயசரணௌ ஸரணம் கதாநாம்  
நைவாயுதாயுதகலாஸ்யபரைரவாப்யா || 29

Lord! It is not possible for people who pursue other paths (like Bhaktiyoga) to attain even a millionth part of what is obtained by those who have become Saranagatas at Thy Feet by (the utterance) of Mantras hallowed by an unbroken tradition based on Vedas etc., or on the saying of others (great ones) suited to their qualifications and status.

The exceptional greatness of Prapannas is extolled in very high terms in this sloka. Persons who follow other paths can come nowhere near the Prapanna who performs Prapatti at the Feet of the Lord by the utterance of the appropriate mantras suited to the particular upasaka. Those mantras have their origin in the Vedas, Pancharatra and similar authoritative pramanas, or it may be those mantras have originated from the works of great souls like Alvars and Acharyas like Yamunacharya and Ramanuja. Their words (vakyas) have the merit of mantras. Vide: சொல்லுமவிடு சுருதியாம் and மொழிவார் மொழிவன மும்மறையாகும். Desika's respect for Poorvacharyas is so great that he refers to their words as equal to the Srutis and Itihasa-Puranas. மாசில் மனந்தெளி முனிவர் வகுத்தவெல்லாம் மாலுக்கந்த வாசிரியர் வார்த்தைக் கொவ்வா is a sentence from a verse in the Rahasya, Pradhana Satakam. The வார்த்தை there has become Vakya here.



It looks to me from this sloka that Prapatthi can be performed even by anusandhana of a sloka like நதர்ம நிஷ்டோஸ்மி or a verse like அகலகில்லேனிறையுமென்று. But the practice adopted by Acharyas beginning from Ramanuja favours only the use of Dwaya Mantra. (29)

### Sloka-30

தத்தா: ப்ரஜா: ஜநகவத் தவ தேஸிகேந்த்ரை:  
பத்யாஸ்பிநந்த்ய பவதா பரிணீயமாநா: |  
மத்யே ஸதாம் மஹிதபோகவிஸேஷஸித்தயை  
மாங்கல்யஸுத்ரமிவ பிப்ரதி கிங்கரத்வம் || 30

People who have been handed over to Thee (by way of Kanyaadaana) by eminent Acharyas, as if by their father (the bride's father) and wedded (wholeheartedly received) by Thee as Bridegroom with delight, in order to obtain the supreme bliss of union, amidst (similar) prapannas, bear (wear) servitude to Thee like the auspicious maangalya sutra Taali thread (மாங்கல்ய சுரடு).

— — —

This is the central sloka of the Stotra, 30th sloka in a stotra of 59 slokas. It holds out Prapatti as a wedding of the individual soul (Jeevatma) with Paramatma. The individual soul is in the position of the bride in a wedding. The Lord is the Bridegroom. The Acharya (who performs Prapatthi) is the father (King Janaka in Sitakalyanam). The Prapatthi is kanyaadaanam. Normally the formula uttered is தாஸ்யாமி விஷ்ணவே துப்யம். Here that Vishnu Himself is the bridegroom. He is the Pati or husband who rejoices at this gift made to Him. He takes hold of the Jeeva firmly. பரிணீயமாநா: also means wedded (பரிணயம்—Wedding).

Thereafter i. e. after the prapatthi (wedding)—the prapanna (bride) lives in the midst of dedicated souls like himself (herself). And to ensure the maximum of bliss, engages



himself (herself) in service to the Lord, which is like keeping the தாவிச் சரடு safe and sound. Even as a lady maintains her mangalya sutram, the Prapanna keeps up his servitude to the Lord. This is in the post-prapatti period and hence is known as உத்தரக்குத்யம்.

As already stated, from sloka 21 this stotra deals with upaya or means. Slokas 21 to 23 deal with Bhaktiyoga. 24 deals with Karmayoga and Gnana Yoga. From Sloka 25 onwards Prapatti is the topic. Its nature and the angas were referred to in slokas 26 and 27. Sloka 27 refers to the actual performance of Prapatti (ஸாங்கப்பரபதம்). Sloka 28 praises the Prapanna as one whom the Lord has been long looking for and is happy to get now. Sloka 29 points out the great merit of the Prapanna as compared to other Upasakas.

Act of Prapatti being completed, what follows is உத்தரக்குத்யம். This sloka 30 must be read out and explained to many ill-informed persons who in their ignorance link Saranagati with death. Many, I have myself heard, say that if Saranagati is performed to a person he will die at once. There are others who say that Saranagati is to be thought of only immediately before death and a specious argument is put forward by them, "If prapatti is performed one must thereafter become strictly orthodox and cannot move freely in society as before."

To correct them all, Swamy Desika has depicted Saranagati as a wedding in this sloka. It is an Atma Vivaha. May this way of looking at Prapatti appeal to all and bring happiness and auspiciousness to everyone who is fortunate to be born in the system promulgated by Vedanta Desika which lays special stress on the efficacy of Prapatti.

Referring to Lord Ranganatha, Desika has sung அஸோஷ ஜந ஸங்க்ரஹனாய ஸோதே ரங்கே புஜங்க ஸயநே, ஸ மஹா புஜங்க ,



That Lord's desire can be fulfilled only by followers of Vedanta Desika who has postulated and promulgated a path to reach Him available to one and all. (30)

## Sloka-31

திவ்யே பதே நியதகிங்கரதாதிராஜ்யம்  
தாதும் த்வதீயதயயா விஹிதாபிஷேகா: |  
ஆதேஹபாதமநகா: பரிசர்யயா தே  
யுஞ்ஜாநசிந்த்ய யுவராஜபதம் பஜந்தி || 31

Lord meditated upon by Yogis! Prapannas coronated by Thy Grace in the seat of kingship consisting in loving servitude in the celestial Region, become freed from all sin and attain the state of a Crown-Prince by service rendered to Thee till the fall of the body.

— — —

Desika here refers to the kingdom of Service (கிங்கரத்வ ஆதிராஜ்யம்). To the Prapanna that kingdom is secured by Lord's Grace. He is going to be crowned king in the திவ்யேபதே — celestial seat,—later. But immediately he is raised to the position of the Crown-Prince who will take up kingship sooner or later.

It was marriage in the previous sloka. It is kingship in this,

The certainty of Purushartha is vouched for by saying that the Prapanna has already become the Crown Prince (heir-apparent to the throne) here. The kingdom is henceforth his by every right. The Lord's Daya has accomplished that much for the Prapanna. (31)



## Sloka-32.

த்வாம் பாஞ்சராத்ரிகநயேந ப்ருதக்விதேந  
 வைகாநஸேந ச பதா நியதாதிகாரா: |  
 ஸம்ஜ்ஞாவிஸேஷநியமேந ஸமர்ச்சயந்த:  
 ப்ரீத்யா நயந்தி பலவந்தி திநாநி தந்யா: || 32

The fortunate ones (worship) perform pooja to Thee according to the various and different systems in vogue in Pancharatra Agama or according to the mode laid down in Vaikanasa Agama, respectively, in which they are trained (or for which they are marked out) strictly adopting the names of Thine, out of love, and thereby spending their days profitably.

Paricharya or service was mentioned in the previous sloka. What it consists in is mentioned in this sloka. Aradhana is done to the Lord according to the Agamas which are mainly two in number, Pancharatra and Vaikhanasa. In Pancharatra there are several systems or Samhitas such as Paadmam, Paarameswaram etc., which Samhita is to be followed is a matter defined by age-long custom. So too in Vaikhanasa Agama.

The mode and method of worship are prescribed by the said Agamas. Further, each method adopts a particular name of the Lord and that is referred to as ஸம்ஜ்ஞா விசேஷம் here.

The Archana or worship must be the outcome of ப்ரீதி or love. Sri Bhashyakara is never tired of using the word ப்ரீதிகாரித in relation to Kainkaryam. யதாசு புத்ரம் தயிதம் ததைவோபசரேத் ஹரிம். Like a dear son. மருவு நன்மகனென as Swamy puts it in Sri Vaishnava Dnaachari.



Thus is every day spent by the fortunate few who have by the Grace of an Acharya become Prapannas, and who are certain of the Lord's Protecting Grace taking them unto Him at the end of their life. Till then they take special pleasure in serving Him here by Aradhana or worship which is no longer a means to an end but an end in itself. தெரித்தெழுதி வாசித்தும் கேட்டும் வணங்கி வழிபட்டும் பூசித்தும் போக்கினேன் போது. This is the ideal that Tirumalisai Alwar has set for us. (32)

### Sloka-33

வாஸ்ரமாதி நியதக்ரமஸூத்ரபத்தா  
பக்த்யா யதார்ஹவிநிவேஸிதபத்ரபுஷ்பா |  
மாலேவ காலவிஹிதா ஹ்ருதயங்கமா த்வாம்  
ஆமோதயத்யநுபராகதியாம் ஸபர்யா || 33

The worship performed to Thee by persons with minds uncontaminated by (the sixfold) faults like Kama, krodha etc., gladden Thee like garlands lovingly prepared by firm threads, conditioned by Varna and Ashrama, containing suitably placed leaves (Tulasi) and flowers and offered with devotion to adorn Thy chest appropriate to the occasion (or the time of the day.)

— — —

A sloka with a double meaning (Slesha). Garlands of flowers tied together by strong strings and consisting of pleasing admixture of green leaves (like Tulasi) and multicoloured flowers offered by devotees out of love—no, prepared and offered with love, gladden the Lord's heart.

Prapannas strictly adhering to the prescribed duties pertaining to their respective Varna and Ashrama worship the Lord by the eight kinds of flowers ahimsa,



control of the senses, compassion towards all creation, forbearance, knowledge, tapas, contemplation and satyam, and the Lord is mightily pleased thereby.

Kaalavihita is a very suggestive term. The flower must be suited to the occasion ; also to the time of the day. போதெல்லாம் போது கொண்டு (1st போது means time of the day ; the second means flowers) Vide also காலை மாலை கமல மலரிட்டு (33)

### Sloka-34

ப்ரஹ்மா கிரீஸ இதரேப்யமராய ஏதே  
நிர்தூய தாந் நிரயதுல்யபலப்ரஸுதிந் |  
ப்ராப்தும் தவைவ பதபத்மயுகம் ப்ரதீதா:  
பாதிவ்ரதீம் த்வயி வஹந்தி பராவரஜ்ஞா: || 34

Those who have correctly understood what is superior and sublime, and what is inferior and low, and who are noted for their utter contempt for, and rejection of, the so-called benefits (equal to the fruits enjoyable in hell that can be conferred by the fourheaded Brahma, by Siva the God of Kailasa hill, and others who are known as Devas, — follow the path of the Pativrata in regard to Thee with a view to attain the twin lotus Feet of Thine.

Sita Devi has said யோமே பர்த்தா ஸமேகுரு: He who is my husband is my Lord and Ruler. That is the essence of Paativritya. Swamy Desika has equated பாரமைகாந்த்யம் with பாதிவ்ருத்த்யம் in several places in the Rahasyas. To the true Paramaikanti, the other Gods like Brahma and Siva do not count at all, and the benefits they can confer are not worth having. Those benefits are referred to as நிரயதுல்ய பலம் or fruit equal to hell. பராவரதத்வ விவேகம் must lead one to yearn for attaining the lotus Feet of the



Lord and to reject all other fruits as trifles. This mentality must be visible in every act of ours. (34)

## Sloka-35

நாத த்வதிஷ்டவிநியோகவிசேஷஸித்தம்  
 ஸேஷத்வஸாரமநபேஷ்ய நிஜம் குணஜ்ஞா: |  
 பக்தேஷு தே வரகுணர்ணவ பாரதந்தர்யாத்  
 தாஸ்யம் பஜந்தி விபணிவ்யவஹாரயோக்யம் ||  
 35

Lord! Ocean of excellent qualities! Those who have a correct knowledge of Thy gunaas (qualities), disregarding even the state of being Thy servants fit to be disposed of by Thee as per Thy inclinations, desire the state of being slaves to Thy true devotees in such a manner as to be bartered away by them by way of sale or purchase (as in the market).

Perialwar's idea of பாகவத சேஷத்வம் can be seen from his verse (4-4-10) கேசவா, புருடோத்தமா, கிளர் சோதியாய், குறளாவென்று பேசுவார் அடியார்கள் எந்தம்மை விற்கவும் பெறுவர்களே. The devotees of the Lord, nay, their servants, can sell us like chattels.

It is a great feature of Sri Vaishnavite philosophy that the ultimate and final Purushartha (புருஷார்த்தகாஷ்டை) is service to the Lord's devotees, to their devotees in turn and so on. 7 stages are indicated both by Nammalwar and Kulasekhara (the author of Mukundamala). Swamy Desika refers to this as ஸப்தபர்வ வ்யவதாந துங்காம் சேஷத்வ காஷ்டாம்...in Srimad Paduka Sahasram (26). This is the outcome really of the Lord's great love towards His devotee, whom He refers to as His Atma. That is why this sloka refers to குணஜ்ஞா: whereas the previous sloka referred to பராவரஜ்ஞா: The great ones who have well understood the Lord's true traits take special pleasure in becoming dassa



(servants) of His devotees. The first stage is to place oneself completely at the disposal of the Lord (பகவத் சேஷத்வம்). This is referred to as த்வதிஷ்ட விரியோக விசேஷஸித்தம் நிஜம் சேஷத்வஸாரம். But the குணஜ்ஞா: desire to go further, knowing that the Lord will be immensely pleased thereby. That further stage is தேபக்தேஷு விபணிவ்யவஹார யோக்யம். Vipani-vyavahara is sale and purchase of commodities in the bazaar. The prapanna wants to become a chattel whom the Lord's devotees may dispose of as they like.

In the Yatiraja Saptati, Desika refers to this state as பரஸ்பரம் க்ரய விக்ரயார்ஹ தஸ்யா ஸமிந்ததே. Vipani Vyavahara is a wider term and can take in sale, purchase, pledge, exchange and barter.

Very few slokas of this stotra contain an address to the Lord. This Sloka has two (1) நாத! (2) வரகுணர்ணவ! Lord, and Ocean of excellent attributes—one for பகவத் சேஷத்வம் and one for பாகவத சேஷத்வம் respectively. (35)

### Sloka-36

ஸத்பிஸ்த்வதேகஸரணர்நியதம் ஸநாதா:

ஸர்ப்பாதிவத் த்வதபராதிஷு தூரயாதா: |

தீராஸ்த்ருணீக்ருதவிரிஞ்சபுரந்தராத்யா:

காலம் கூழிபந்தி பகவந் கரணைவந்தயை: || 36

Bhagavan! The courageous ones who look upon the true men of God to whom Thou art the sole refuge, as their chiefs, who run away to a distance on seeing people who sin against Thee, as if they have seen serpents, and who treat with contempt Brahma, Indra and their like, and who are steadfast in faith and behaviour, they spend their time in such a manner that all their senses and faculties are put to the best use (not dissipated or wasted.)



This sloka tells us how an ideal Prapanna spends his time here below till he is, at the end of this life, taken to Paramapadam. Four distinctive features of the life they lead are mentioned (1) They always revel in the company of godly men who have surrendered themselves to the Lord and attained a state of at-one-ment with Him and attunement to His Will. This ஸத்ஸங்கம் is of utmost importance in keeping our purity and chastity untarnished. This is one of the conditions which make heaven of earth ஸம்ஸ்குஜ்யதேயதிச தாஸஜநஸ்த்வதிய: ஸம்ஸார ஏஷ்பகவந் அபவர்க்க ஏவ. Varadaraja Panchasat (43) In திருச்சின்னமாலை Swamy sings சேமமெண்ணி எம்மையன்பர்க்கடைத்தார் வந்தார். "For my welfare He has entrusted me to the custody of His Devotees. Such a He has come." Sita Devi asks Ravana

இஹ ஸந்தோ நவாஸந்தி ஸதோவா நா நுவர்த்தஸே |  
ததாஹி விபரீதாதே புத்திராசாரவ்ஜித ||

Can it be that there are no God's goodmen at all here? or is it that you do not care to follow them? That is why your intellect is so perverted and your conduct so reprehensible. That is a lesson taught by Sita Devi to us that we should always seek the company of the ஸந்த: (The same Vedic term is used in this sloka ஸத்பி: ஸநாதா:)

2. Equally important is the need to avoid the company of wicked men with sinful and sinning propensities. Run away from them as from cobras.

Probably to lay the foundation for such a lesson being imparted to children and women, the Paramapadasopana Padam (Picture) has been devised with 108 squares to be traversed by an அக்ஷரார: or ஆடுகிறகாய் according to the casting of dice. If the pawn (காய்) per chance gets into a square occupied by a serpent there is a descent, sometimes a terrible descent. If the square has a ladder [then the pawn moves up to the top of the ladder. These are illustrative of



the effect of association (ஸத்ஸங்கம் or otherwise) on the spiritual progress of a man.

3. The Prapanna has no illusions about the power and position of the Devas such as Brhma, Siva, Indra etc., Knowing full well that சடைமுடியன் சதுர்முகனென்று இவர் முதலாந்தரமெல்லாம் அடைய வினைப்பயனாகி அழிந்துவிடும், the Prapanna regards them all with contempt, but not hatred by any means. A true Vaishnava cannot bring himself to hate any body or anything, for everybody and everything is his Lord's Vibhuti (property). It is indifference and not any positive dislike. உன்னித்து மற்றோர் தெய்வம் தொழாள். 4. The last attribute is unflinching steadfast faith in blemishless conduct (அனுஷ்டானம்). This is elaborated in the words அங்கீகூர்வந் அநகலளிதாம் வ்ருத்திம் ஆதேஹபாதாத் in Srimad Rahasyatrayasara.

Thus they spend their days, each faculty (கரணம்) and each Indriya (sense) getting its full share of enjoyment on proper lines. This is வாழ்வு or life. Others merely exist as do animals and birds. வையத்து வாழ்வீர்காள் (Andal) வாழும் வகையறிந்தேன் (Peyaiwar) (36)

### Sloka 37.

வாகாதிகம் மநஸி தத் பவநே ஸஜீவே  
பூதேஷ்வயம் புநரஸௌ த்வயி தை:ஸமேதி |  
ஸாதாரணோத்க்ரமணகர்ம ஸமாஸ்ரிதாநாம்  
யந்த்ரா முகுந்த பவதைவ யதா யமாதே: || 37

Mukunda! Even as Thou alone dost bring about the end of the gods like Yama, the god of death, so too by Thee alone is brought about the ascent of the soul from the body in the case of ordinary people thus: The Indriyas like Vaak (speech) are first gathered into the mind, that mind into the praana (vaayu), the praana into the soul (atma) and this soul into the elements; and again the soul comes to Thee along with them.



The end comes in the shape of the soul's departure from the body. That process is mentioned here. Incidentally it is stated that in the case of everyone including Yama, the god of death, it is the Lord and Lord alone that brings about that உத்க்ரமண which means uprising of the soul from the body.

The ten indriyas are gathered into the mind. That mind in the praanavaayu (ப்ராண வாயு) which in turn seeks refuge in the soul. That soul mingles with the elements in their subtle state and joins the Lord.

This is the process applicable to the common run of mankind. The next Sloka refers to the utkramana of the Prapanna. (37)

### Sloka-38.

ஸவ்யாந்யயோரயநயோர்நிஸிவாஸரே வா  
ஸங்கல்பிதாயுரவதீந் பைதி ப்ரபந்நாந் |  
ஹார்த:ஸ்வயம் நிஜபதே விநிவேஸயிஷ்யந்  
நாமம் ப்ரவேஸயஸி நாத ஸதாதிகாம் த்வம் || 38

Lord ! with a view to make Prapannas enter into Thine own Sthanam (Paramapadam) Thou who dost reside in their hearts quickly make them (their souls) enter into the Sushumna Naadi which is above the hundred naadis (in the human body) — this Thou dost either in the Dakshinaayanam or Utharaayanam, either during night or day, just at the end of the life as determined by Thee.

To the Prapanna whichever is the place or moment where or when his bodily existence comes to an end, it is auspicious நன்னிலமாமது .நற்பகலாமது. This is not so in the case of Bhaktiyoga nishtas. Their utkranti



must occur only in daytime and that too in Utharaya-  
yana and during bright fortnight (சுக்ல பக்ஷம்)

ஸங்கல்பித ஆபரவதி—the end of life as willed by  
Him. At that moment—night or day—whatever அயநம்  
it may be, the Lord who resides in the prapanna's heart  
makes him enter the ஸுஷும்நா நாடி as a prelude to  
taking him to Paramapadam. (38)

### Sloka 39.

அர்ச்சிர்திநம் விஸதபக்ஷ உதக்ப்ரயாணம்  
ஸம்வத்ஸரோ மருதசீதகர: ஸஸாங்க: |  
ஸௌதாமநீ ஜலபதிர்வலஜித் ப்ரஜேஸ:  
இத்யாதிவாஹிகஸகோ நயஸி ஸ்வக்யாந் || 39

Thou, associated with Agni, the god of day, the Suk-  
lapaksha, the god of Utharayana, the god of the whole year  
Vayu the god of wind, the Sun, the Moon, the god  
of lightning, Varuna, Indra, and Brahma, who are  
ஆதிவாஹிசுர்கள், dost lead Thy own people (Prapannas).

This sloka is a true translation of the அதிகார ஸங்  
கிரஹ verse (No. 28) pertaining to கதிவிசேஷாதிகாரம்  
of Srimad Rahasyatraya-sara.

“கடைபெற அங்கி பகலொளி நாள் உத்தராயணம் ஆண்டு  
இடைவரு காற்று, இரவி, இரவிற்பதி, மின், வருணன்  
குடையுடை வானவர் கோமான் ப்ரசாபதி யென்றி வரால்  
இடையிடை போகங்களெய்தி எழில்பத மேறுவரே.

Each of those gods plays host to the released soul who  
is being led by the Lord (நயாமி பரமாம் கதிம்) in his  
respective region. This is known as அர்ச்சிராதி மார்க்கம்  
because அர்ச்சிஸ் or Agni begins the series. (39)



## Sloka-40.

த்வச்சேஷவ்ருத்யதுக்ருணர்மஹிதைர்குணைளகை:  
 ஆவிர் பவத்யயுதஸித்தநிஜஸ்வரூபே |  
 த்வல்லக்ஷணேஷு நியதேஷ்வபி போகமாத்த்ரே  
 ஸாம்யம் பஜந்தி பரமம் பவதா விமுக்தா: H 40

When the true state (Svaroopā) of the Released Souls inseparable (from Thee) becomes manifest along with the hosts of their sublime qualities suited for rendering service to Thee, they in the matter of enjoyment, attain a state of equality with Thee, though some traits of Thine (like ஜகத்காரணத்வம் and லக்ஷ்மீபதித்வம்) pertain solely to Thee.

— — —

பரிபூர்ணப்ரம்மாநுபவம் is the topic of this sloka. The Mukta comes to his own and shines with his full attributes conducive to his seshatva swarupa. It is true that there are certain special features appertaining to the Lord like the power of creation etc., which can never be acquired by the Mukta. But that does not detract from his ability to enjoy along with, and as fully as, the Lord Himself. போகஸாம்யம் is a fundamental concept in Visishtadwaita even as போகதாரதம்ய is in Dwaita philosophy.

The Mukta according to our Siddhanta has a form like that of the Lord Himself and Shanka and Chakra too! The saamyam (equality) extends to Roopa or Form also—ஸாரூப்யம். Bhoga-saamyam means ஸமான போகம். One may be a master, the other servant. The former enjoys being served; the latter enjoys rendering service. Vide ரமமாண வநே த்ரய : of the Ramayana. (40)

## Sloka-41

இத்தம் த்வதேகஸ்ரணைரநகைரவாப்யே  
 த்வத்திங்கரத்வவிபவே ஸ்ப்ருஷ்யாஃபராத்யந் |  
 ஆத்மா மமேதி பகவந் பவதைவ கீதா  
 வாசோ நிரீக்ஷ்ய பரணீய இஹ த்வயாஃஹம் | 41



Bhagavan! By thus aspiring for the glory of serving Thee, a glory obtainable only by those blemishless great ones who have sought refuge in Thee, I feel I have committed an offence; yet looking at my ancients (Poorvacharyas) about whom Thou hast Thyself sung (said) 'my soul'. I deem myself worthy of being protected by Thee.

— — —

ப்ராசோநிரீக்ய seems in my humble opinion a more apt reading than வாசோநிரீக்ய. The words with which Alavandar's Stotra Ratna concludes are brought to our mind பிதாமஹம் நாதமுநிம் விலோக்ய|ப்ரஸீத மத்வ்ருத்தம் அசிந்தயித்வா. The poet looks at the great Purushartha he is aiming at; he also looks at himself: he feels abashed and ashamed—nay, he thinks he has offended the Lord by aspiring for something which only great ones can achieve. Immediately he consoles himself with the thought 'I am a worthless person, no doubt: but my Acharyas — are they not persons about whom the Lord has sung ஜ்ஞாநீது ஆத்மைவமே மதம். Am I not an ஆத்மீய of those Acharyas? So I am also deserving of, and sure to obtain, protection from the Lord,

By satisfying the craving of this unworthy being, what does the Lord lose? Nothing. This is very beautifully said in the next sloka. (41)

### Sloka-42

பத்மாமஹீப்ரப்ருதிபி: பரிபுத்தபூம்ந:

கா ஹாநிரத்ர மயி போக்தரி தே பவிதீ |

துஷ்பேத் கிமங்க்ரிதடிநீ தவ தேவஸேவ்யா

துர்வாரதர்ஷசபலேந ஸுநாஸவஸீடா ||

42

What detriment would occur here to Thee if I also enjoy Thy infinite glory enjoyed by Lakshmi, Bhoo devi etc.? Does



the stream originating from Thy foot 'Ganga' which is worshipped by the Devas become polluted by being lapped (drunk by licking) by a dog with uncontrollable thirst ?



The stotra which was descriptive and didactic till now becomes personal from sloka 41 and is calculated to provide mystic enjoyment and increase devotional fervour.

வடிவினை யில்லா மலர்மகள் மற்றை நிலமகள் பிடிக்கும்  
மெல்லடியைக்கொடு னினை யேனும் பிடிக்க.

That was the desire evinced by Nammalwar—to caress those tender Feet of the Lord which Lakshmi and Bhooodevi always caress and fondle—"this I too desire knowing what a wretched sinner I am". Desika sings in the same strain in this sloka. Why should I not enjoy the Lord who is eternally enjoyed by His Consorts like Lakshmi, Bhoomi and Neela? மஹிஷீ னும் ஆநிமேஷ தர்ஸநீயம். His beauty is of course enjoyed by His Consorts with winkless eyes. That beauty will in no way be diminished or besmirched if I also enjoy it—however unworthy a being I may be.

The analogy is very telling. The Ganga is ஸுரஸிந்து celestial river, It has its origin from the Lord's foot. The Devas resort to it. Siva carries it on his head. Such a Ganga is approached by a dog which quenches its thirst by lapping the waters of that great river. Has anyone at any time regarded the Ganga as polluted thereby? Ganga continues to be a ஸுரஸிந்து and தேவஸேவ்யா nevertheless.

The 5th sloka of Alwan's (Koorathalwan) Sristava must have inspired Desika to sing thus : "Bhagirati does not get defiled if a dog licks its waters. The dog is not condemned nor does it feel asbamed. On the other hand it has its thirst abated."



May I not also have my thirst for you, O ! Deepapra-  
kasa ! abated by enjoying somewhat your unfathomable  
Bhooma (Glory) ? (42)

*Sloka-43*

ஸத்வாநி நாத விவிதாந்யமிஸஞ்ஜிஞ்ருக்ஷோ:  
ஸம்ஸாரநாட்யரஸிகஸ்ய தவாஸ்து த்ருப்த்யை |  
ப்ரத்யக்பராங்முகமதேரஸமீக்ஷயகர்த்து:  
ப்ராசீநஸஜ்ஜநவிடம்பந பூமிகா மே || 43

Lord ! Thou dost evince a great taste for (to enjoy)  
this drama called samsara and for gathering various and  
varied beings. For Thy delectation let me, without know-  
ledge of my atma and unaware of right conduct, don the  
part of the ancient righteous people.

இன்புறும் இவ்வினையாட்டுடையான் is Alwar's descrip-  
tion of the Lord enjoying Leela-rasam. All the world is a  
stage—said Shakespeare. The Lord and Sri are the Specta-  
tors. So Desika refers to the Lord as a Rasika enjoying the  
ஸம்ஸார நாட்யம் enacted by the numerous beings. Desika  
also place his part. He refers to himself here as one who rejects  
spiritual values and one who does not know what conduct is  
right, what wrong. So he prays to the Lord "Let me put  
on the costume (வேஷம்) of great and good men, those  
celebrated by the Veda as பூர்வே ஸாத்யா: தேவா: (and by  
Desika himself as பாட்டுக்குரிய பழையவர்.) I know you are  
fond of them. You have referred to them as your atma. So  
If I act their part, though you know I am only bluffing,  
still you will have a soft corner for me. So let me enact great  
men's part for your enjoyment".

A strange request indeed! For, instead of praying to the  
Lord to make him a truly good person, Desika is here  
asking a boon of the Lord to imitate good persons.



Nammalwar's கையார்சக்கரத்து Tiruvolmozhi (V-1) is in Desika's mind here. There the Alwar sings: கையார் சக்கரத்து என் கருமாணிக்கமே யென்றென்று பொய்யே கைம்மை சொல்லிப் புறமே புறமேயாடி and என் கொள்வன் உன்னைவிட்டு என்னும் வாசகங்கள் சொல்லியும் வன்கள்வனேன் மனத்தை வலித்துக் கண்ணீர் கரந்து நின்கண் நெருங்க வைத்து. Even though he was insincere, his attempts to imitate the true devotees of the Lord were rewarded by the Lord making him a true devotee. மெய்யே பெற்றொழிந்தேன் I acted a false part; but it has come to be true.

In sloka 40 Desika imitated Alavandar and in 41 Kooralthawan by giving expression to sentiments voiced by them. Even if I have repeated those sentiments without full faith—அஹ்ருதயாநபி, I am sure the Lord will be pleased and I shall really become what I pretend to be—a true devotee, by His Grace. (43)

#### Sloka 44.

கர்த்தவ்யமித்யநுகலம் கலயாம்யக்ருத்யம்  
ஸ்வாமிந் அக்ருத்யமிதி க்ருத்யமிதி த்யஜாமி |  
அந்யத் வ்யதிக்க்ரமணஜாதமநந்தமர்த்த-  
ஸ்தானே தயா பவது தே மயி ஸார்வபௌமீ || 44

Swamin! Every moment I do prohibited acts as if they were acts ordained to be done. I give up doing ordained acts as if they are prohibited ones. Like these, the hosts of my other transgressions are innumerable. Thy Mercy (Daya) the Supreme Empress should be there to help me obtain my desire (Purushartha).

The poet stands aghast when he thinks of his acts of commission and omission—studiously avoiding performance of ordained duties, and at the same time never failing to do a prohibited act. Here Desika seems to go one step further in நைச்யானுஸந்தானம் than even Nammalwar. The Alwar



said: "I know all these are good and must be followed: I also know all these are bad and must be rejected. But I am unable to follow the good and reject the evil." That was a negative aspect. Desika however says here "I know what is bad and ought not to be done, but I never fail to do it. I know what ought to be done and I make it a point never to do it." Thereby Desika seems to indicate that he needs the support of the Lord's Daya in a much larger measure than Alwar.

Our faults and errors do not stop with அக்குத்ய கரணம் and க்ருத்ய அகரணம். There are others (அந்யத்) similar transgressions in shoals.

Unless the Lord's Daya comes to our aid what hope is there for us? The Lord cannot help us, for our transgressions are all against His rules. His numerous gunas like Gnana, Bala, Aisvarya etc., cannot help us to escape His wrath; they will expose us all the better to His ire. Only Daya—that great quality of the Lord which connotes mercy, grace, compassion, sympathy and forbearance—that alone can come to our help, and so we must pray for Daya's presence at the time of securing our Purushartha. In other words Daya is the only Upaya—means, refuge.

Sarvabhaumee, means am Empress to whom nothing is impossible. In the Daya Satakam Daya is spoken of as குணேஷு ஸார்வ பெளமீ and குணேஸ்வரீ. (44)

### Sloka 45.

யம் பூர்வமாஸ்ரிதஜநேஷு பவாந் யதாவத்  
தர்மம் பரம் ப்ரணிலகௌ ஸ்வயமாந்ருஸம்ஸ்யம்  
ஸம்ஸமாநிதஸ்த்வமஸி தஸ்ய ஸரண்யபாவாத்  
நாத த்வதாத்தஸமயா நநு மாத்ருஸார்த்தம் :: 45

Lord! Thou now dost stand reminded i. e., I now remind Thee, of the great righteous doctrine truly expressed



by Thee regarding kindness and compassion towards those who have sought refuge in Thee. As Thou art (our) Protector, the promises made by Thee,—are they not for people like me?

— — —

Sita Devi's words are incorporated into this sloka. ஆங்குஸம்ஸ்யம் பரோதர்ம: த்வத்த ஏவ மயா ஸ்ருத: "Compassion is the highest among dharmas. I have heard this from you only". Having said so, my Lord!, when a helpless being like me stands before you, are you not in a way reminded of those words of yours uttered as Rama known for truth and uprightness! Those declarations and promises of protection are only for people of my ilk.

Other slokas like மித்ரபாவேந ஸம்ப்ராப்தம் and ஸக்ரு தேவப்ரபந்தாய can also be thought of. (45)

#### Sloka-46

த்ராணம் பவேதி ஸக்ருதுக்திஸமுத்யதாநாம்  
தைஸ்தைரஸஹ்ய வ்ருஜிநைருதரம்பரிஸ்தே |  
ஸத்யாபிதா ஸதமகாத்மஜஸங்கராதௌ  
நாத ஸுமா ந கலு ஜந்துஷு மத்விவர்ஜம் || 46

Lord! Thy kshama (forbearance) which voraciously devours the insufferable sins, which baffle separate or detailed description, of those who set about uttering even once the prayer "Be (my) Protector," and which stood (was) verified in the case of Indra's son (Jayanta), Sankara and others—that kshama will certainly not exclude me (alone) among beings.

— — —

The poet thinks of that great quality of the Lord which is known as ஸுமா or பொறுமை (forbearance) and hopes that in his case also it will help to pardon, if not overlook, his sins. There is no reason why he alone should be an exception to the rule of reprieve. (மதேகவர்ஜம்கிமிதம்வ்ரதம்தே.



What is this vow of yours which takes in the whole world and leaves out me alone - asks Alavandar).

Two instances - very notable ones - in which Kshama played a very great part come to Desika's mind. Indra's son Jayanta molested Sita Devi in the form of a crow (Kakasura episode). Was he not allowed to escape with his life even though Brahmastra had been aimed at him? Desika enjoys this noble act of the Lord in a Tamil verse. ஆகண்டலன் மகனாகிய ஆவலிப்பேறியதோர் காகம் பிழைத் திடக் கண்ணழிவே செய்த காருத்தனே. There is a pun on the word பிழைத்திட. It means having committed an offence; it also means - in order that it may live.

The other instance is that of Siva who joining hands with Baanaasura gave immense trouble to the Lord. Even he was pardoned.

That there are many more is shown by ஆதௌ.

In sloka 44, Daya-guna was praised; in this sloka kshama guna. They work together. (46)

#### Sloka-47

கர்மதிஷு த்ரிஷு கதாம் கதம்பயஜாநந்

காமாதிமேதுரதயா கலுஷப்ரவ்ருத்தி: |

ஸாகேதஸம்பவ சராசரஜந்துநீத்யா

வீக்ஷய: ப்ரபோ விஷயவாஸிதயாஸ்ப்யஹம் தே || 47

Prabho! (Lord and Master!) Being unaware of even a reference in some manner, to the three yogas beginning with Karmayoga, and indulging in wicked ways due to a surfeit of desire, I am yet fit to receive Thy glances on the sole ground of my residing in Thy country, as per the rule applied to the beings—mobile and immobile—born in Saketa (Ayodhya).



It has been said that when Sri Rama at the end of His incarnation left this world for His Heavenly Abode, He took with Him all சராசரங்கள் born and living in Ayodhya அன்று சராசரங்களை வைகுந்தத் தேற்றி ... is Kulasekaralwar's description of this fact.

Nammalwar's "புற்பா முதலாப் புல்லெறும்பாதி யொன்றின்றியே நற்பாலுக்குய்த்தனன்" has been understood by some commentators as referring to the ascent of all and sundry to Vaikunta, though others give a different interpretation to those words.

Koorathalwan in sloka 69 of his Varadaraja Stava asks Lord Varadaraja : "It has been said that you can be attained only by Gnana, Karma and Bhakthi, and by no other means. May I know which out of these was pursued by the denizens of Ayodhya?" This is one way of saying that though they had not any such yoga to their credit, the Lord took them with Him for the sole reason that they lived in Ayodhya. அயோத்தியில் வாழும் சராசரம் முற்றவும் all of them attained eminence merely because of living in Ayodhya.

So too we can pray to the Lord - Desika shows the way to us - to give us a lift to His land, though we don't know the a, b, c, of, Karmayoga, Gnanayoga, or Bhaktiyoga, and though we have not conquered our senses or subdued our desires.

It is worthy of note that Desika has not given expression to a similar sentiment in any other stotra in praise of other Emberumans. There is a propriety and a personal touch in the anusandhana in this sloka, விஷய வாஸிதாப்யஹம் தே. Swamy Desika was born at this Divya Desa and in a place very near the Temple of Deepaparakasa—the agraharam being known by the name of Tooppul. Every sacred city, every Divya Desa and every Emberuman can and will claim Desika to pertain or belong to it or Him. But with all that, he is தூப்புல் வேதாந்ததேசிகன் wherever he may be. No wonder



he prays to this Lord of his birthplace. "Protect me for this one reason, and pray do not search for any other virtue in me." (47)

### Sloka-48

ப்ரஹ்மாண்டலக்ஷஸதகோடி கனூநநந்தாந்  
ஏகக்ஷணே விபரிவர்த்ய விலஜ்ஜமாநாம் |  
மத்பாபராஸிமதநே மதுதர்ப்பஹந்தரீம்  
ஸக்திம் நியுங்க்ஷவ ஸரணுகதவத்ஸல த்வம் || 48

Thou fond of Sarnagatas! Thy prowess (Sakthi) is so immense that it not only put down the pride and arrogance of the asura called Madhu, but in a trice turns about (destroys) countless groups of lakhs and hundreds of crores of Brahmandas (Universes) and feels shy. Pray, command that Sakti to destroy the vast heap of my sins.

Even after one becomes a Prapanna and obtains a feeling of security, one is apt to get upset at times by thinking of the countless sins of his committed from ancient times. On all those occasions naturally he is prone to send a fervent appeal to the Lord to destroy his sins. That the Lord has the power to do so is a very comforting thought. My sins are so immense that more than ordinary Sakti will be required to crush them. The Lord has such great Sakti. Is he not Madhusoodana—one who crushed the pride and arrogance of that asura Madhu who walked away with the Vedas? My darpa (pride) is as great as that asura's, probably greater.

Another feat of this Sakti is thought of. During pralaya how many universes crumble and tumble down at His Will and by His prowess! Even that is child's play to Him; His sakti feels ashamed that this was all it was asked to achieve.

Devotees all over the world voice similar feelings. Thayumanavar in one verse of his puts a question thus :



‘There are ever so many feats that you O! Lord! achieve. The deep sea stands without any bank—poison becomes nectar—a stone becomes a damsel, and so on. Is it totally beyond you to do a trick that will subdue and concentrate my wretched mind?’

In the Varadaraja Panchasat Desika warns the Lord that if He does not put down his sins immediately, they will soon get out of hand even for Him. ஸக்யம் த்வயாபி நஹி வாரயிதும் கரீஸ. Please look sharp.

If Swamy Desika, who led a pure and blemishless life feels that way, what about us? (48)

### Sloka-49.

ஆஸ்தாம் ப்ரபத்திரிஹ தேஸிகஸாக்ஷிகா மே  
ஸித்தா ததுக்திரநகா த்வதபேக்ஷிதார்த்தா |  
ந்யஸ்தஸ்ய பூர்வநிபுணஸ்த்வயி நந்விதாநம்  
பூர்ணே முகுந்த புநருக்த உபாய ஏஷ: || 49

Mukunda! Let Prapatti performed in the presence of (or to the knowledge or with the help of) Acharya, and let the utterance of the word of Prapatti which is faultless and already available—let them remain in respect of what Thou lookest for in me. At the present moment, to me who has had his prapatti performed in regard to Thee who are a poorna, by my expert Poorvacharyas, this Upaya becomes redundant.

— — —

This sloka is not easy to understand. There appears to be a reference to the three well-known forms of Prapatti :-  
1. Swanishta (performed by the Saranagatha himself. 2. Ukti Nishta (உக்தி நிஷ்டை) in which the Saranagata goes through the process under the guidance of his Acharya and (3) Acharya Nishta wherein the Saranagatha's Acharya



performs prapatti for him—he himself playing only a passive part. (There is a fourth one also, known as Bhaagavatanishta—not mentioned here)

The first half of the sloka refers to the first two. But do the words தேசிக ஸாக்ஷிகா, ஸித்தா, and அநகா govern only துத்தி: or both ப்ரபத்தி: and ததுத்தி:?

Some commentators take the whole of the first quarter as referring to ஸ்வநிஷ்டை. In that case, the word தேசிக ஸாக்ஷிகா cannot have full meaning and application. ஸித்தா and அநகா can well be taken to apply to both. I confess it is beyond me.

But the idea of the sloka is quite clear. To me whose Acharyas have done prapatti for me, both swanishta and uktinishta are needless surplusages.

The Lord is a Mukunda—one who confers Moksha. He is a Poorna. So there can be no need for another prapatti.

Here also பூர்வநிபுணை: in the plural is a bit intriguing. Does it mean that prapatti has been performed by a plurality of Acharyas? or is the plural merely a honorific plural? It must be the latter. Parasara Bhatta also sings தவ பரோஹ மகார்ஷிதார்மிகை: (II-102)

Readers can remind themselves here of the verse in அடைக்கலப்பத்து beginning with the words அளவுடையார் டைந்தார்க்கும். There all the four nishtas find mention. (49)

### Sloka-50

யத்வா மதர்த்த பரிசிந்தநயா தவாலம்  
ஸம்ஜ்ஞாம் ப்ரபந்த இதி ஸாஹஸிகோ பிபர்மி |  
ஏவம் ஸதிதே த்வதபவாத நிவ்ருத்தயே மாம்  
பாத்ரீ குருஷ்வ பகவந் பவத: க்ருபாயா: || 50



Bhagavan! Enough of Thy probing into my credentials or qualifications. I do boldly bear the designation 'Prapanna.' It being so, (at least) for warding off blame attaching to Thyself, please make me the recipient of Thy Grace.

Swamy Desika is an expert in argument, as in every other art. Here he requests the Lord to stop enquiring into whether prapatti has been properly done, if so, in which of the modes, and so on. Enough of that enquiry and research. Rightly or wrongly I boldly call myself a Prapanna, or rather other people refer to me as a Prapanna. If you do not protect me, what will happen to your titles like ஸரணாகத ரக்ஷக etc.? Swamy Desika is here taking a leaf out of his favourite Alwar Tirumangai Alwar, who refers to himself as one தேசமறிய உமக்கே யாளாய்த் திரிகின்ற who goes about the world believed by one and all to be a true devotee of the Lord. If I am protected, well and good; if not, what will the world say about you? கதியென்றும் தானாவான் கருதாது ஓர் பெண் கொடியை வதை செய்தானென்னும் சொல் வையகத்தார் மதியாரே. You will lose the respect and regard which you now enjoy.

Saahasam is a bold or rather rash act. I am guilty of saahasam in calling myself a prapanna and in passing off as a Prapanna before the world. Yet if I am not protected, your fair name will be tarnished. To avoid that, please extend your Grace towards me. (50)

### Sloka 51.

த்யாகே குணே ஸ ஸரணாகத ஸம்ஜ்ஞிதோ மே  
ஸ்த்யாநாகஸோ஽பி ஸஹஸைவ பரிக்ரஹே வா |  
கிம் நாம குத்ர பவதீதி க்ஞபாதிமிஸ்தே  
கூடம் நிருபய குணோதர தாரதம்யம் || 51



Lord of all Gunaas! (Auspicious attributes). In regard to me who has acquired the designation that I am a Saranagata (Prapanna) in spite of my being a great sinner, please confer in private with Dayaguna etc., about giving me up or quickly accepting me, considering what alone will conduce to Thy credit or otherwise.

— — —

This sloka contains a sentiment similar to the one voiced in the previous one, but states it in a revised and refined form.

Pray do not rush to protect me in order to escape from apavada (blame) or paraabhava (humiliation) (Alavandar's way of putting it is பராபவோ நாத! நதே அநுரூப:). Take your time and think over what to do deeply. Please don't feel hustled. You are a Gunesa—Lord possessing numerous auspicious attributes. Please get up a conference of all your Gunas and decide therein whether to protect me or to give me up. Only, let Kripa (Daya) be the leader (foreman in a jury constituted to advise) and preside at that conference. (In the Daya Sataka, Daya was enjoyed as defence counsel in a criminal trial). The pros and cons may be duly weighed. I am a great sinner. But I have become a Prapanna. Or rather, I am now known to be a Prapanna. Can you afford to give me up because I am a sinner? or should you not rush to my rescue because I am a Prapanna. By doing which, will you be benefited or be a loser? Please consider. The use of the word ஸஹஸைவ in regard to parigraha reminds us of the threat uttered by Desika in sloka 38 of Varadaraja Panchasat. If you tarry any longer, my sins would have sprouted to such an extent that even you will be powerless to put them down.

In the slokas that follow Desika very beautifully goes on mentioning several reasons how and why the Lord Himself will find it difficult and unprofitable to Himself to give up a



## Sloka-52

Prapanna, and how because of His own words and pledges He is bound to protect. On the top of all, a reward awaits Him the moment He protects us, as we shall see. (51)

## Sloka 52.

ஸ்வாமீ தயா ஜலநிதிர்மதுர: க்ஷமாவாந்  
 சீலாதிக: ஸ்ரீத வஸ: ஸ்சிரத்யுதார: |  
 ஏதாநி ஹாதுமநகோ ந கிலார்ஹஸித்வம்  
 விக்யாதிமந்தி பிருதாநி மயா ஸஹவ || 52

(Lord ! ) Thou canst not afford to give up (lose) these well-known titles of Thine namely (1) Swamy, (2) Ocean of Daya (3) Sweet Person (4) One who has forbearance (5) exceedingly free in mixing with all and sundry (Sauseelyam) (6) One who is a slave to His votaries (7) pure and (8) liberal to a fault and (9) bereft of blemish - to give up all these along with me.

A very fine way of saying to the Lord : "If you do not protect me, you will lose me and you are not likely to get another of my stamp so richly deserving protection at your hands (தயநீய: தவநாத துர்லப:—Alavandar). What is worse, you will lose all your greatness and glory and forfeit your right to several titles that are now yours". Nine of them are mentioned. You will lose them all when you lose me. You certainly cannot afford to lose those great qualities of yours,—but that will be the inevitable result of not protecting me. If I go away from your presence spurned by you, mind you, I shall not go alone. These great titles of yours will all follow me, and you will no longer be in a position to claim to be a Swamy, or a Dayasaagara and so on."

In the Varadaraja Panchasat only one title was referred to ஸ்ரீராகதாநாம் ஸம்ரகிதா (sloka 35) as likely to be lost. But here nine titles are mentioned.



In the last sloka of Atimaanusha Stava, Alwan sings  
 த்வஜ்ஞாநஸக்திகருணா ஸதீஷு நேஹ பாபம் பராக்ர  
 மிது மர்ஹதி மாமகேநம். "When your noble qualities are all  
 safe and intact, let not my sins get the upper hand." Here,  
 Desika puts it more strongly and threatens the Lord with loss  
 of His greatness and glory if he is not protected. Desika can  
 be petulant, when he chooses. It is the petulance of a child  
 towards its mother. (52)

### Sloka 53.

வேலா தநஞ்ஜய ரதாதிஷு வாசிகை: ஸ்வை:  
 ஆகோஷிதாமகில லோக ஸரண்யதாம் தே |  
 ஜாநந் தஸாநந ஸதாததிகாகஸோ஽பி  
 பஸ்யாமி தத்தமபயம் ஸ்வக்ருதே த்வயா மே || 53

(Lord!) Knowing full well that Thou art the Refuge  
 (Protector) of all the worlds, as proclaimed by Thy own  
 utterances on the sea-shore and from Arjuna's chariot etc.,  
 I see (and rely on) the Abhayam (protection from fear) con-  
 ferred by Thee (albeit) for Thy own sake, on me, having  
 sins far more immense than those of a hundred Ravana's.

There is a Tamil idiom காலேக்கட்டுதல் meaning pray-  
 ing and beseeching for help by all methods till the help is  
 rendered. We see Desika doing it with consummate art in  
 this part of this fine S'otra. We shall see by and by how he  
 employs saama, daana, bheda and danda, the four weapons  
 to be utilised judiciously to achieve one's purpose. சரணக்ர  
 ஹண (காலேப் பிடித்துக்கொள்ளுதல்) is true not only figu-  
 ratively but also literally, since these prayers are all made at  
 the Lord's feet, nay catching hold of them. (Vide: ஸப்ராது:  
 சரணம் காடம் நிபிட்ய ரகுந்தன: Lakshmana). Is there  
 a surer way of eliciting another's sympathy than by catching



hold of his feet? அநதிக்ரமணீயம் ஹி சரணக்ரஹணம்—  
(Sri Bhashya).

Sloka 50 began by saying, Pray do not think about what I really am, but went on to say “please think of yourself and your glorious gunas for retaining which at least, you should protect me.” In this sloka Desika is willing to have his own qualifications considered. He summarises them in one expression தசாநந சதாத் அதிகாகஸ:—more sinful than a hundred Ravana. Undeterred by that idea, Desika reminds the Lord of His own words uttered on the seashore as Rama, and from Arjuna’s chariot as Krishna. Are they not voluntary utterances made without compulsion and not under duress or undue influence (வாசிகை: ஸ்வை: (c.f.) ஸோக்தித: of Abheeti-stava sloka) Those words especially மித்ரபாவேந, ஸக்ருதேவப்ரபந்நாய, ஸர்வ பூதேப்ய:, யதிவாராவண: ஸ்வயம் and ஸர்வபாபேப்ய: have emboldened me to approach you fearlessly and with certainty of protection.

In fact, Desika seems to suggest, “You, Lord!, must be grateful to me. The other day you asked Sugreeva to bring Vibheeshana, or even Ravana himself. Sugreeva brought only Vibheeshana, a Dharmatma. Now I am bringing myself and placing myself before you. I am more than Ravana, nay more than hundreds of Ravana. Pray vindicate yourself and prove the truth of your utterances by protecting me. தத்தம் அபயம் பஸ்யாமி—I see Abhayam given to me, not merely promised. Perumal’s words to Sugreeva were ஆநயே நம் ஹிரிஸ்ரேஷ்ட தத்தம் அஸ்யாபயம் மயா—“Abhayam has already been extended to him, even before I began to consult you all.” That this proffering of Abhayam was actually done by the Lord who thereby implemented His utterances (வாசிகை: ஸ்வை:) is indicated by the use of the words ஸ்வக்ருதே தத்தம் அபயம். The sloka of Abheetistava beginning with the words ஸக்ருத் ப்ரபதந ஸப்ருஸாம் அபய தாந நித்யவ்ரதி may be enjoyed in this connection. (53)



## Sloka-54

ரக்ஷயஸ்த்வயா தவ பரோ஽ஸ்யஹமித்யபூர்வாந்  
 வர்ணாநிமாநஹ்ருதயாநபி வாசயித்வா |  
 மத்தோஷ நிர்ஜித குணோ மஹிஷீ ஸமக்ஷம்  
 மா பூஸ்த்வதந்ய இவ மோக பரிஸ்ரமஸ்த்வம் । 54

(Lord) Having made me utter these words "I am to be protected by Thee; I am a burden unto Thee" which I never uttered before, which are mere (empty) words not emanating from the heart (but only from the lips), pray do not render Thy effort fruitless (valueless) by allowing Thy Great qualities to be degraded by my sins, like other gods, and that too in the presence of Thy Consort, Lakshmi.

What will happen if the Lord, refuses to overlook our sins and afford protection to us, is pointed out in this sloka. The Lord would have wasted His time for nothing.

But for His grace we would never have approached Him; nor would we have uttered the words (by way of Saranagati) "I am yours (தவாஸ்மீதிசயாசதே) you alone can protect me. The burden of my protection lies on you, I being entirely helpless". The Lord alone out of His infinite mercy took pity on us and made us utter these words. We never uttered them before, though we have been born and reborn in this world for ages and ages beyond count. Even now we are not in a position to assert that these words have proceeded from the recesses of our heart. The Lord has seen to it that those words have passed out from our lips. Having done so much, it is not proper for the Lord to render all this valueless, by refusing to accept us as His Saranagatas and to extend His protection to us,—all for the reason that we are sinners. If that happens, it will mean that His superior and sublime qualities have been vanquished, by our sins. (The last sloka of Atimānusha Stava is well



worth recollecting once again. “நேஹ பாபம் பராக்ரமிது  
மர்ஹதி மாமகேநம்”

There are, of course, others calling themselves gods in whose case such things may and do happen (vide sloka 19 ante) Let that not happen to you and let not your efforts in bringing me to this state become a waste or a worthless endeavour. (மோஹ பரிஸ்ரமம்). Having taken me thus far, pray complete your task which lies ahead, and which is not much compared to what has been achieved. ஏதாவதும் கமயிது : பதவிம் தயாளோ : ஸேஷாத்வலேஸ நயநே க இவாதி பார! Varadaraja Panchasat (34).

Above all, Desika calls to the Lord “please remember that Lakshmi is by your side. Our Prapatti as per Dwaya Mantra takes in the two of you What will She think of you if you allow your great qualities to be defeated by my sins and feel helpless like other gods whom Tirumalisai Alwar describes as “பேணிலும் வரந்தர மிடுக்கிலாத தேவர்”. Finally, please also remember that if you fail, Lakshmi will come to my rescue. “வேரி மாருத பூமேலிருப்பாள் வினை தீர்க்கும்” She is always with you only to prevent our sins getting the upper hand. Vide ஈண்டிய வினைகள் மாண்டிட முயன்று நின்னுடன் சேர்ந்து நிற்கும் நின் திருவே—அருள் தரும். (Mummanikkovai—1)

Reference may also be made to sloka 36 of Varadaraja Panchasat ending with the words பாரே கரிஷ்யதி தயா தவ தூர்நிவாரா. “Unobstructed by you, your Daya will come to my rescue if you keep mum (யதி ஜோஷ மவஸ்த்தி தஸ்த்வம்) seeing me floundering in the sea of distress.”

Lakshmi is Dayaroopi (vide : கருணாமிவ ரூபிணீம்). (54)



## Sloka 55.

முத்யம் ச யத்ப்ரபதநம் ஸ்வயமேவ ஸாத்யம்  
தாதவ்யமீஸ க்ருபயா ததமி த்வயைவ |  
தந்மே பவச்சரணஸங்கவஜ்ஜிமவஸ்தாம்  
பஸ்யந்நுபாயபலயோருசிதம் விதேயா: || 55

Rever! That Prapatti which is important and is performable by oneself—that too can be, has to be, bestowed only by Thee out of Thy grace. Pray also consider my present state with a fondness for Thy Feet, and bestow on me what you think fit and proper, in respect of the means and the end.

Swamy Desika points out in this sloka that Prapatti which is an important upaya can be gone through only if the Lord so wills out of His mercy. Phala of course is undoubtedly only in His hands. He alone has to confer it.

It looks as if this sloka is couched in the Sattivika Tyaga form. The Lord's help is needed for the performance of the upaya that is Prapatti. That performance by itself is not going to confer the phala on us. His Sankalpa is needed for that. Let that Sankalpa work out my redemption.

(I confess I am not satisfied with what I have set down here by way of commentary on this difficult sloka.) (55)

## Sloka-56

அல்பாஸ்திரைரஸுகரைரஸுகாவஸாநை:  
து:க்காந்விதைரநுசிதைரபிமாநமுலை: |  
ப்ரத்யக்பராகநுபவை: பரீக்ஷர்ணிதம் மாம்  
த்வய்யேவ நாத சரிதார்த்தய நிர்விவிஷும் || 56

Lord! I am staggered by enjoyment of the individual soul and of material pleasures which are trivial and evanescent, which are not easy, which invariably end in the negation



## Sloka-57

of pleasure, which are accompanied by pain, which are inapt and unfitting, and which cause conceit. Pray convert such a person (myself) into one desiring only Thee and make me one with accomplished desire.

Nammalwar's verse கண்டு கேட்டுற்று மோந்து உண்டு  
முலும் ஐங்கருவி கண்ட இன்பம், தெரிவரிய அளவில்லாச்  
சிற்றின்பம்.....ஒழிந்தேன் appears to be in the poet's mind  
when he sings this sloka. The pleasures I am tasting are of  
two kinds—one ப்ரதயக் அநுபவம் or கைவல்யம்—the other  
பராக் அநுபவம் material pleasures. Alwar refers to the  
former as தெரிவரிய அளவில்லாச் சிற்றின்பம் indescribable  
endless paltry pleasure. The other set of pleasures which we  
derive through the senses are mentioned before Kalvalyam  
by the Alwar. Dasika groups them together and points out  
how both are subject to the seven well-known defects.  
(தோஷ ஸப்தகம்). 1. அல்ப—Trivial 2. அஸ்திர or transient,  
impermanent; 3. அஸுகர not easy to pursue; 4. அஸுகாவ  
ஸாந ending in pain; 5. துக்காந்வித accompanied by grief;  
6. அநுசித: not compatible with our true nature and there-  
fore, ill-befitting us, and 7. அபிமாநமூல leading to selfcon-  
ceit or ஸ்வாபிமாநம். Please rid me of the pursuit of such  
so called pleasures and let me concentrate on desiring to  
attain Thy Feet. In that way, cleanse me of my base desires  
and make me fit for enjoying you and you only.

For the last word of the sloka there is a reading  
நிர்வினிக்ஷம் in place of நிர்வ்யபேக்ஷம். நிர்வினிக்ஷம் has  
been taken with த்வய்யேவ to give the meaning, desiring to  
have enjoyment of Thee alone) (56)

## Sloka-57

தத்வாவபோதஸமிதப்ரதிசுலவ்ருத்திம்  
கைந்தர்யலப்தகரணந்ரயஸாமரஸ்யம் |  
க்ருத்வா த்வதந்ய விமுகம் க்ருபயா ஸ்வயம் மாம்  
ஸ்பாதிம் த்ருஸோ, ப்ரதிலபஸ்வ ஜகஜ்ஜநந்யா, || 57



Lord! Out of Thy Grace, make me, of Thine own accord, one whose acts opposed to Thy Will (i. e., Shastras) are quelled by correct knowledge of the Tattwa, and one who has obtained in and through service (to Thee and Thy chosen devotees) co-ordinated one pointed devotedness in regard to my triple faculties of thought, word and action—make me ignore everything and everybody but Thee, and (thereby) regain the bloom of the glances of the Mother of the Universe—Lakshmi.

— — —

This sloka is practically the last one in this Stotra. The next two are by way of Satvikatyaga and phalasruti.

The two aspects of human desire anishta-nivritthi and ishtapraapti are dealt with respectively in the first and second quarters of the sloka.

My pratikoolavritthi must come to an end. That alone has been responsible for keeping me tied down to birth and death (Samsara). This kind of mental make-up of man is beautifully summarised in one sentence of Paramapada Sapanam நீ பகவத் கிங்கரனென்றால் ஒமென்றிசையாதே யமகிங்கரர்க் கிடமாம்படி இந்திரிய கிங்கரனாய்ப் போந்தபடி. If the Lord Himself claims us by saying “த்வம்மே—you belong to me,” not only do we disown Him but we assert our independence by telling Him to His face ‘அஹம்மே’ I belong to myself.

The praatikoolyam must be got rid of by obtaining a correct knowledge of Tattwa or the Truth, that He alone is the Swamy or Seshi, and we are dasas or Seshas. That way we must put ourselves in tune with His Will. Or rather He, the Lord must help us to attain a state of attunement and at-one-ment with Him, and thereby to atone for our past errors of commission and omission.



That is அநிஷ்ட நிவ்ருத்தி the negative aspect. Positively, we must develop—or rather He must confer on us the capacity to develop, a taste for Him and His company, and towards that end collect our scattered Trikaranas (மனோவாக்காயம்) and give them a one-pointed absorption in Him. This is கரணத்ரய ஸாமரஸ்யம். சிந்தையாலும் சொல்லாலும் செய்கையாலும்.... and என்னம்மான் பொங்கேய் புகழ்கள் வாயவாய், புலன் கொள் வடிவு மனத்ததாய். அங்கேய் மலர்கள் கையவாய் வழிபட.. This at-one-ment and synthesis among the three karanas will show themselves in selfless service to the Lord and to His chosen devotees This is the positive content of Mukti.

As a corollary to the aforesaid twofold realisation, nothing and no one else will count as anything to us. That additional symbol of true daasyam must also be there, and that is referred to in the third quarter—indifferent to all but you.

All these the Lord must achieve for us out of His innate Grace and out of His own accord (ஸ்வயம்).

For doing all this for our welfare and uplift, the Lord is promised an inestimable prize in the shape of Lakshmi—is why He is a Param-Brahmam as Bhattar puts it. (அபாந் கோபயாம்ஸ:). But a special and appreciative Kataksha from Lakshmi Devi's lovely eyes is what is referred to here. When the Lord redeems a Chetana from Samsara, Lakshmi rejoices and that is reflected in Her Kataksha. The word used here to signify Lakshmi is Jagat Jananee—the mother who has given birth to this world. Purpose of creation is to afford an opportunity to souls to redeem themselves and when that redemption takes place, Her heart rejoices and She casts a warm, loving and lingering look on the Lord who at Her behest has achieved that much.

We said in the course of enjoying sloka 53 ante that it looks as if Desika is employing Saama, daana, bheda and



danda—ஸாம, தான, பேத, தண்ட—all the four strategies to achieve his purpose. This sloka refers to the daana—gift or prize in the shape of Lakshmi's fond look. Sloka 55 referring to upaya or phala and praying for help is in a soft and appeasing mood—Saama. மாபூத் த்வதந்ய இவ மோஹ பரிச்ரமம் smacks of bheda. The threat to His titles in slokas 50 and 52 is suggestive of தண்டோபாயம். Who can deny that Desika is an artist of the first magnitude? Art lies in concealing art.

True to the theory that Moksha is attainable here in this world itself, Desika does not refer to life beyond. He wants to be a Mukta here itself. பெறுவதெல்லாம் இங்கே நாம் பெற்று வாழ—முக்தாநுபூதிமீஹ தாஸ்யதி மே முகுந்த :—ஸ்வயம் ஸமுதிதம் வபுஸ் தவ கிராமயந்த: ஸதா வயம் த்ரிதஸ நிர்வ்ருதம் புனிமுகுந்த விந்தேமஹி—ஸம்ஸார ஏஷ பகவந் அபவர்க்க ஏவ—வைகுண்டவாஸேபி நமேபிலாஷ:—All having their roots in Alwar's outpourings such as the இங்கே திரிந்தேர்க்கிமுகுக்குற்றென் verse which has also furnished the கரணத்ரய ஸாமரஸ்யம் idea. (57)

### Sloka-58

இத்தம் ஸ்துதிப்ரப்ருதயோ யதி ஸம்மதா: ஸ்ய:  
யத்வாபராதபதவீஷ்வபிஸம்விஸந்தி |  
ஸ்தோகாநுக்ஷல்யகணிகாவஸவர்த்திநஸ்தே  
ப்ரீதிஷுமாப்ரஸரயோரஹமஸ்மி லக்ஷ்யம் || 58

(Lord!) Praise etc., indulged (by me) in this manner whether they are acceptable to Thee or get into faulty ways, (reckoned as faults) I become the object for the spread of affection or of forbearance of Thine, who art submissive to (won over by) a fraction of a small favourable act.

In sloka 3 at the beginning of this Stotra, we saw Desika saying that he is desirous of praising Lord Deepaparakasa.



After the completion of the Stotra, he now looks back at his production. There has certainly been an attempt to praise the Lord. It is not however all Stuti or praise. So he uses the word Stuti etc., (ஸ்துதிப் ப்ருதய:). The etcetera may refer to several other features such as taunts, jibe, threat and so on. Whether all these have evoked the Lord's approval or whether they are additions to the अपराधas that are already there in plenty, Desika is not sure. Anyway what does it matter which it is? Is not the Lord prone to yield Himself up to one who does a small favourable act—even a fraction of it? What I have done or attempted to do is an அநுகூல வ்ருத்தி though a very minute one. If it is good, I shall be rewarded by His approval. Even if it is not good but faulty, I shall become the object of His Kshama or forbearance. To be the object of His affection or of His forbearance, I am content. I become an object of His attention—may be affection or patience, and that is all that counts.

This is a novel way of offering a Stotra to the Lord by way of Satvika Tyaga at its completion. (58)

### Sloka-59

ஸ்நேஹோபயந்நவிஷய: ஸ்வதஸாவிஸேஷாத்  
பூயஸ்தமிஸ்ரஸமநீம் புனி வேங்கடேஸ: |  
திவ்யாம் ஸ்துதிம் நிரமியீத ஸதாம் நியோகாத்  
தீபப்ரகாஸஸரணாகதிதீபிகாக்யாம் ||

59

Venkatesa, because of (by the strength of) a particular good period (தசை) in his life (aspected by favourable planets) in the matter of suitable (proper) attachment (sneha) (to the Lord) has by the command of the true and great ones (ஸத்துக்கள்) composed this divine Stotra named "Deepa-prakasa Saranagathi Deepika" capable of dispelling the intense darkness (ignorance) prevalent in the world.

— — —  
This is the last sloka of the Stotra as accepted and handed down by commentators and Acharyas. It takes the



place of phalasruti by stating that it is capable of dispelling the darkness of ignorance. There is a slesha (pun) on the word Deepika,—lamp. A lamp has got a receptacle for oil referred to here as விஷய—the oil itself being sneha which of course also means friendliness, affection. Then there is the wick திரி which is known as தசா, and prakasa or light is the result. This lamp full of oil and a particularly fit wick dispels by its prakasa the darkness of the world. And Venkatesa it is that lit this lamp.

The words used bring to one's mind the first verse of Bhootatalwar's Tiruvandadi (2nd Tiruvandadi)

அன்பே தகளியா—ஸ்நேஹோபபந்த விஷய  
ஆர்வமே நெய்யாக—also ஸ்நேஹ உபபந்த  
இன்புருகு சிந்தை இடுதிரியா—ஸ்வதஸா விசேஷாத்  
ஞானச் சுடர்விளக்கு—தீபப்ரகாஸ ஸரணாகதி தீபிகா.

Like the lamp lit by the Alwar this is the lamp lit by Venkatesa. The lamp lit by Bhootatalwar was referred to by Amudanar as இறைவனைக்காணும் இதயத்திருள் கெட ஞான மென்னும் நிறைவிளக்கு. The lamp lit by Desika is தீபப்ரகாஸ ஸரணாகதி தீபிகா which dispels the darkness prevalent in the world.

Vedanta Desika reckons himself very fortunate in having been enabled to sing this Stotra. Two chief reasons for his having sung this Stotra are mentioned here. The first is a very propitious period in his life. (நல்ல தசை or தசா விசேஷம்) and it relates to a matter regarding Sneha or love and that too a very adequate and fitting (உபபந்த) love. What else can it be except love towards the Lord? That is the only love which is உபபந்த. (கண்ணனுக்கே யாமது காமம்). Love towards others is அநுபபந்தம். The second is the command of ஸத்துக்கள் (ஸதாம் கியோகம்). When they desire that something great and glorious must happen, it is seen to happen. It was indeed a very good and propitious time—Swamy seems to suggest—that I received this



behest from my elders who answer to the Vedic description of a Sat.

In verse No. 10 of his Tamil Prabandham Navamani-malai, Desika has said that he had the command and blessing of Lord Devanatha to sing His praises in nine works in three languages Sanskrit, Prakrit and Tamil. முந்தை மறைமொழிய வழி மொழி நீ என்று முகுந்தன் அருள் தந்த பயன் பெற்றேன் நானே. You follow the path laid down by the ancient scriptures and speak accordingly. This was the Lord's directive issued to Desika out of His Grace And by these nine works Desika feels that he has had the Lord's grace in full measure and thereby enabled to fulfil the task entrusted to him.

Here, it is the Lord's chosen Devotees who directed Desika to sing this Sarangati Deepika in praise of Lord Deepaparakasa.

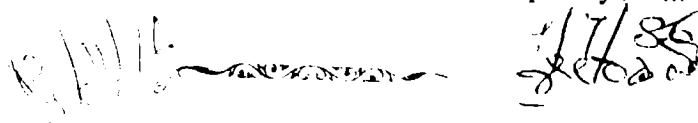
The name தீபப்ரகாச ஸரணுகதி தீபிகா justifies the pratigna or promise made in the first sloka which was to the effect that the essential tenets of Yatiraja—Mahaanasa—Sampradayam are presented in the shape of a stotra in praise of the Lord of Sri. Thus this Stotra is at once a stotra in praise of the Lord, and a treatise on the sacred sampradaya handed down to Desika by a series of eminent Acharyas—a sampradaya which Desika himself has referred to elsewhere as அஸ்மத் தேசிக ஸம்ப்ரதாயம்.

கவிதார்க்கிகவிம்ஹாய கல்யாண குண ஸாலிநே |  
ஸ்ரீமதே வேங்கடேஸாய வேதாந்தகுரவே நம : ||

All glory to Vedanta Desika !

All glory to Lord Deepaparakasa !!

All glory to Yatiraja-mahaanasa sampradayam !!!





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